PARIS AS IT IS

An intimate account of its people, its home life, and its places of interest.

By Katharine de Forest

LLOYD WENGROW

# PARIS AS IT IS.

A General View of Paris from the Louvre.

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ITS PEOPLE, ITS HOME LIFE,
AND ITS PLACES OF INTEREST

BY
KATHARINE DE FOREST

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# *Preface.*

The writer of this book is an American who exiled herself from her country, not by intention; for chance sent her to Paris and fetters of business kept her there. Her expatriation found comfort, however, in an unusual privilege of contact with many phases of French life; which, beholding with two pairs of eyes, she has sought to translate into philosophy. For, indeed, the Old World is in many respects *terra incognita* to the New. The tourist knits his brows in passing like a pilgrim under the dull eyes of the Sphinx. Here, for instance, is a country which for some hundreds of years has kept a certain number of its citizens set apart, starred, medalled and uniformed as immortals—how shall that be interpreted at the beginning of the twentieth century? Old art and literature, old temples and monuments, old customs and traditions, have these a message to neologists? Do they rest on eternal principles and

speak of unchanging truths? This book is perhaps less a guide-book than a dream-book. Certainly it was written, not so much to give information, as to interpret the genius of Paris. Nevertheless its facts are from inside, reliable and in large part inaccessible sources. Thanks are due in particular to M. André Saglio, of the Beaux Arts, for many suggestive facts, especially in regard to the French movement in art.

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# PART I.

# THE LIFE AND PEOPLE.

ERRATUM.

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# *The Charm of Paris.*

What is the secret of this enigmatic charm of Paris which, sooner or later, takes possession of everyone? What is it about Paris which seizes people, envelops them, holds them, and often keeps them forever, even those who profess to have the greatest lack of sympathy for the French? "Every man has two countries," said an old writer of the last century, "his own, and then France." And this seems to hold true even now of the capital. What is the key to this mysterious seduction? This is something which has intrigued and fascinated me from the time I first began to know the French capital. And now I have discovered that when you have solved this enigma you have got at one of the best means for understanding the French people.

For a long time it was instinctive to look to the natural beauty of Paris as one of the principal sources of her charm, for she is singularly happy in her site; as Montaigne put it so picturesquely, "*Elle est grande en felicité de son assiette.*" All her natural features combine to give varied artistic effects, especially the Seine, which traverses the city with the curve

of a bow, so that with each quay and each bridge the landscape becomes of an entirely different character.

At the little Pont de la Tournelle, for instance, what could be of more impressive grandeur than the view of the old Isle de la Cité rising in gray walls from the very water's edge to meet the massive and delicate silhouette of Notre Dame? But from the Pont des Arts, at the foot of the town, the Island of the City is entirely different. It is a fantastic vessel, with the spire of Ste. Chapelle for a golden mast, which cleaves the Seine with its elongated point, green with plants and flowers, like a prow.

At the Pont des Invalides the scene changes again. At the turn of the stream the horizon is bounded by the Trocadero, rising with its two minarets from the side of a hill, and you would say the river stopped there to lose itself in some mysterious gulf hidden in the gardens of that Palace of the Thousand and One Nights. Beyond the Pont de Passy, near the Isle des Cygnes, you are in Holland. The river is a melancholy basin whose low, green shores are bordered by dark, smoking factories. Then, as you look off and your eyes fall on the hills of Sèvres and of Meudon outlined in soft, undulating lines against the sky, and you seem to be sailing in some old French print.

Paris is like a fruit divided into two halves

by the gleaming steel of the river, and over each half on either side rises a height which augments the impression of immensity. On the left bank it is the Mountain of Sainte Geneviève crowned by the Panthéon, with its belt of columns on which rests its enormous dome. On the right is the white church of the Sacré Cœur, gleaming on the hill of Mont Martre like some celestial vision. It is at its threshold, rather than from the Eiffel Tower or anywhere else, I think, that you get the most poignant impressions of Paris as a whole. It lies spread out before you, with its setting of distant hills, its swarming expanse of houses dominated here and there by palaces, and broken by the green of gardens; and from that distance the sounds of the city come to you only as one great suppressed murmur, a murmur palpitating with the life of this great heart of the old world. All this natural beauty it is easy to recognize as one of the great advantages of Paris, but beauty counts for very little in its charm. And, indeed, my experience is that Paris is not one of the cities whose beauty is spoken of as one of its conspicuous features, as with Edinburgh, for instance. Most people who go there in the summer when it is deserted are disappointed, and if you ask the average stranger what the attraction of Paris is, he rarely answers its beauty, but always its movement, its life; by which

he generally means some such thing as sitting at a little table on the boulevard, or going about to the Bohemian resorts of Montmartre, most of which are entirely arrayed, he discovers later, to meet his preconceived ideals, and have nothing to do with the real life of Paris at all.

For that matter, what can you fix upon as the life of this great city, where each quarter is, as it were, a city within a city, having its own particular character and its own *esprit?* It is as hard to define it as it is to analyze the heart of a man tossed by a thousand conflicting emotions. And yet in the heart of a town, as in the heart of a human being, you can always find dominant characteristics which explain each.

Many years ago a sentence spoken by a little Paris hairdresser first gave me a key to Paris. It was in his shop, which was one of those places where everything suggests traditions and a profession which has been handed down from generation to generation. Over the deep azure gulfs formed by the large mirrors in the little saloon at the back were pieces of old Normandy faïence bearing the legend, "The month begins;" relics of the day when a man's monthly account was marked by a piece of pottery. Two or three cupboards of old carved wood stood about, and in one of the nasturtium-framed windows a large tortoise-

shell cat was tranquilly sleeping. All at once, as the proprietor's wife was ministering to my hair her husband's voice floated sharply back through the stillness: "Here everybody on every round of the ladder can get his share of Paris," he said. "Everybody can enjoy life." Oddly enough, these very same last words fell from the lips of the sculptor St. Gaudens a short time ago, as he was telling some French friends in a general conversation why Paris differed from other cities. "*A Paris les gens jouissent de la vie*," he said. I quote the French because "*jouissent de la vie*" always seems to me to have a little different signification from the English "to enjoy life." I noticed this when I first went to live among French people through the way in which they spoke of "*la vie*." They gave an impression of it as some sort of immense outside thing forever going on for which you were in no way personally responsible, but could dip down into and take out your share, which nevertheless must invariably be paid for. "*C'est la vie!*" the General's daughter would say lightly as she alluded to those maternal misfortunes in consequence of which I was at that moment under her roof; "*Je paie ma douloureuse, a la destinée!*" "Oh, I would rather pay my *douloureuse* in that way than any other," I heard a charming young French married woman say gaily to some one who was condoling with her on her

husband's loss of fortune. But once these dues paid to Destiny, both one and the other would consider that it owed her some satisfaction, and would distinctly include this in her scheme of existence.

That a certain share of enjoyment is an inalienable right of man is the great underlying principle of French genius, and out of this secret springs the charm of Paris. Elsewhere men either burn themselves out with work or they vegetate. It is only in Paris that they establish an equilibrium between effort and relaxation. This is the reason why the Parisians always get the credit of being idlers and loungers in spite of the fact that the output of production there is enormous. But from every effort a man looks forward to getting some immediate return; and, while one return is to come from enjoyment of Paris, some one must see that Paris is a place he can enjoy. This is at once the source of her splendor and her charm. In the afternoon at the stroke of four the house painter puts down his brush and the mason his trowel; each rolls a cigarette and stops to drink a glass of wine. They expect meanwhile to delight their eyes with beautiful surroundings; this need for the *jouissance des yeux* which to other nations is a luxury is a first necessity to the French. During a century and a half the Parisians of the Middle Ages improvised for themselves masons and

Sunday on the Bois de Boulogne.

architects to build Notre Dame, the most beautiful church in the world. And their descendants of to-day have just forced the City Fathers to tear down a building worth a million of francs so they can look at the Hôtel Cluny from a distance of fifty yards. A few months ago they obliged the city to buy for them the Hôtel de Lauzun, a year ago the Hôtel de Lepelletier de Saint Fargeau; every year they vote a large sum of money for some æsthetic purpose. If Paris is beautiful it is because the Parisians will it so. It had at its head for a long time, no doubt, sovereigns who loved splendor and lavished money on magnificent buildings. And, then, in the Second Empire and the Third Republic civil engineers attached to the Government, like Baron Haussmann and Alphaud, replaced them. But if these all built palaces, planted gardens, pierced boulevards, made splendid perspectives, it was only because they marched before a people who demanded these things to compensate them in their daily life of toil.

So we find everywhere in the French capital the charm which comes from the happy mingling with taste and tact of those three great sources of enjoyment, nature, art and souvenirs. Take the Place de la Concorde, for instance, with its splendid space just accented by the obelisk and bronze fountain in the centre, and the statues

of the cities of France sitting about in a circle. On one side is the green of the Elysian Fields, and on the other that of the Tuileries gardens; while the twin palaces, which you would say made a setting for the whole, are the glories of the architecture of the eighteenth century, so exactly are they adapted by their proportions and their mingling of elegance and majesty to the place for which they are intended. As you look along the beautiful route of the Champs Elysées your eye falls on Napoleon's triumphial arch; and then a double avenue leads you to the Bois de Boulogne, which has not only the elegance of a park for the rich, but that perfume of wildness which makes it a place where the poor spend the day with their children on Sundays and fête days.

That everything in Paris is for everybody and everybody is apparently getting his share of enjoyment out of it is one secret of the universal atmosphere of *bien-être*. Nothing is allowed to jar; even funerals are arranged to give the melancholy charm of stately ceremonies, if they are not looked at as fêtes. "A holiday for the fête of Jules Ferry" is the way in which I heard a little boy speak of the closing of school for Jules Ferry's funeral. "If this fine weather continues the day of the dead will be very gay this year," said my old bonne just before the "*Jour des Morts*." She thought of the great baskets of chrysanthemums tended

by white-capped flower women sitting among the whirling leaves, which put color into the streets on that day, and all Paris in family groups clad in that black garb which to her meant holiday going about in stately fashion to put flowers on the tombs of its dead. Everything in Paris is consecrated by a fête. The Spring means the Horse Show, the flower show, the varnishing days of the salons, of flowers in the Bois and the Grand Prix. Everybody gets their share, for those who do not go in carriages pay two sous for a chair on one of the beautiful avenues and watch the driving. Every day during the season they get a fine spectacular show in the driving between five and seven, out to the *Allée des Acacias* in the Bois. Everything which makes a place for itself in the life of Paris sooner or later furnishes an occasion for a function. The last new thing has been the automobile show. When shall we go to the varnishing day of our flying machines?

The old traditions never seem to die out. On Twelfth Night every family that has bread in Paris has a *galette* sent to it as a present by its baker. The *marmiton* you see walking the street in his white dress, as the little baker's boys flit about in "Cyrano de Bergerac," perhaps carries in the basket on his head the same varieties of little cakes that baker's boys carried a century ago. Some of them have quaint old

homes which in themselves possess a charm. There is *"Les Puits d'Amour"*—"Wells of Love;" there is still the *Baba*, the *Savarin* and the *Madeleine*. In the morning you are waked by the old street cries. *"Voici du mour-r-on pour les p'tits-oi-scaux"* comes in a plaintive minor from the merchant of bird seeds. *"Du from-age à la crême"* is a class student note; while the old-clothes man seems to answer it antiphonally in *" 'Chaud 'chaud d'habits."* The picturesque figure in the Basque *Beret* selling goats' milk from his herd announces his presence with a tune almost as eternal as that of the piper of Kant's' Grecian urn. Thus has he piped to his flock since the days when Henri of Navarre first brought some goats and their herder to Paris from his native Pyrenees.

Study the streets of Paris if you want to understand her, The street has always been for the Latins something what the market place was to the ancient Greeks. And, above all, go to the boulevard; not that great road which stretches from the Madeleine to the Bastille, but the boulevard proper, which goes from the Rue Royale to the Rue Drouot. Its character is not the same that it was ten years ago, even five years ago; it changes from day to day, like life itself. The celebrated cafés where the men in the movement met, talked, discussed, created the atmosphere of Paris are no more.

They have been transformed into brasseries through which the world passes without stopping. There are no "boulevardiers" now. The boulevard is only a passage, though the most luxurious one in the world, like a great arcade through which lounge or hasten all the different elements of the capital; the wealthy part of the population coming from the Champs Elysées or the Parc Monceau entering by the Place de la Madeleine; the business world coming from the Bourse or the Marais by the Rue du Quatre Septembre, the left bank of the Seine by the Avenue de l'Opéra, and Montmartre and the Batignolles by the Rue Aubert, the Rue Halévy, the Rue Laffitte, the Rue Drouot; all these mingled with a cosmopolitan stream from every country of the universe. Life on the boulevard seems more intense and concentrated than elsewhere. Under your hand beats all the agitation of a people; you touch the pulse of the whole world.

# *The Academie Francaise*

AND THE OTHER ACADEMIES.

One of the things that dawns upon you more and more as you live in Paris is that all the places are filled. Nothing makes you feel this more than the Academie Française. Not only does it contain seats for only Forty Immortals, and one of these must die before the halo of immortality can descend upon some one else, but when it holds its functions there are seats for only so many of the mortals. In other places, in proportion as mortals multiply on the face of the earth, new buildings are put up to accommodate them, with more seats. In Paris this is not so. The old gray pile of the Mazarin palace, in which sits the Institute, with its five Academies, has looked out over the Seine for three hundred years, and the tiny amphitheatre inside has grown neither larger nor smaller. So precisely the same struggles and heart-burnings to enter it and be among the Immortals, and therefore prove the right to be considered of Tout-Paris, go on now that were seen a century ago when the Academy first began to sit there. "Dear, dead women, . . . what's

become of all the gold, Used to hang and brush their bosoms," I thought, the first time I went to one of its receptions, and watched the file of the beautiful women of to-day throng into the amphitheatre in a chill, white atmosphere which, until it took on warmth and color from toilets and perfumes, you would say was in its very composition crystallized thought and congealed tradition. What has been the end of all their struggles? Who are the Immortals now?

It is principally the women who keep up "the superstition of the Academy." This is another question of tradition. Long ago, when Voltaire was made an Academician by Madame de Pompadour, he said that it were better to be in the good graces of a King's mistress than to write a hundred volumes; and even now when there are no more Kings, with their mistresses, women still have an influence of untold importance on an Academic election. Mr. Howells has said that women make the literature in America. They do not make the literature in Paris, but they do hold the Salons and make the vogue without which a man is never elected an Immortal. His eligibility for this reposes on some such principle as that which governs a society marriage. Someone has defined a mésalliance as a marriage between two young people who are not accustomed to meet in the same houses.

So, when the members of this "pleasant club for elderly gentlemen" find they must choose a new companion to whom they are to be united as long as they live, the principal thing they demand of him is that he be a person they are in the habit of meeting socially. For this reason, the simple sentence: "Il n'est pas de la société," settles Zola's pretensions as an Academic candidate, as years ago the fact that Théophile Gautier was slovenly in his dress and wore his hair long, affected his. "I will vote for him," said Guizot sarcastically, of a certain individual, "because he is polite, decorated and has no opinions."

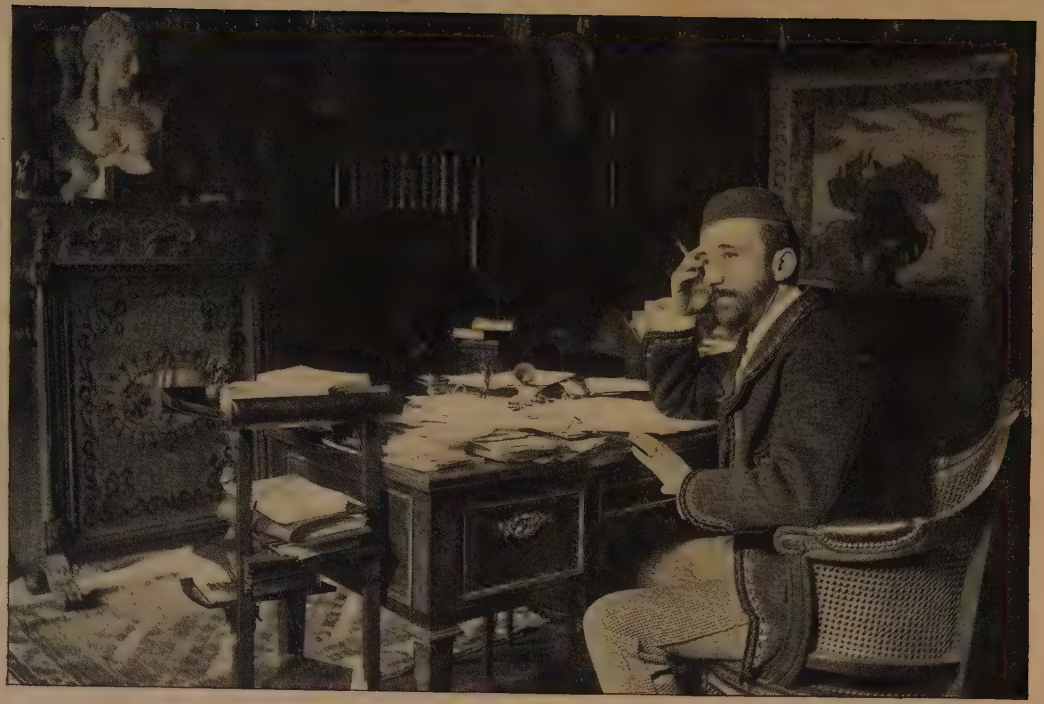
The Academy was founded at a time when the protection of a king or some personage of rank was necessary to give prestige to writers, and to-day it is a sort of exclusive club protected by the State which has nothing to do with the glory of French letters, and no influence upon them. Who make up the present list of the Immortals? Thirteen men who are really an honor to the literature of the country, seven upon whose mediocrity everybody is agreed, eight savants, one sculptor, an archbishop, four politicians and five dukes. You see in the number the sculptor Guillaume, the diplomat Hanotaux, the archbishop Perraud, the mathematician Bertrand, the ex-Ministers Freycinet and Ollivier, the economist Thureau Dangin; but you do not

see the names of any such men of talent as Zola, the Rosny, the Marguerite brothers, Maurice Barrés, Gebhart, Huysmans, Mistral, Porto Riche, de Curel, Richepin, any more than you saw those of Alphonse Daudet, Verlaine, Flaubert, Maupassant, de Goncourt, Baudelaire, George Sand, Balzac, or long ago, Molière. Academicians are very often not lettered men at all. Somebody, I do not remember who, gave much entertainment to himself as well as to his friends by making a collection of autographs of the Forty in which there was not one that did not contain a mistake in spelling. "There are forty of them there who have the esprit of four," is a well-known mot. Publishers have told me that the famous phrase "de l'Academie Française" on the title page of a book no longer influences in the slightest way its sale. From a literary standpoint the Academy becomes every year more and more a tradition.

From its social side it gains possibly in prestige because all the time it is growing richer. Before the law it is a "personalité civile" with the right of inheriting, and endless are the legacies it receives and the prizes it disposes of—prizes bestowed principally upon the books of those men and women whom Academicians know. The little cabals and intrigues, therefore, that are always in solution in all society centre about an Acad-

emician like crystals around a thread. In precedence he is the equal of a duke and higher than an archbishop. Octave Feuillet used to tell of the sudden change in his position in his own country when he became an Academician. Before that he was nothing but a writer, a man of no importance, and when he went to dine at the château, or with any of the great people of the neighborhood, he was always the last to go in to the table. After his election he was invariably placed at the right of the hostess. It is evident that to recognize an author only when he has received a sort of stamp making him eligible for society cannot be a real gain to literature; if it levels the distance between him and a duke, it establishes a factitious inequality between him and other writers.

But from all this it is easy to see the importance, as a function, of a fashionable reception at the Academy. Go just before one and have a talk with old M. Pingard, the head of the bureau of administration, son and grandson of the old Messieurs Pingard, who were the chiefs of this bureau before him. You will find him sorting an apparently numberless collection of little violet, blue, green, mauve and white bits of pasteboard, and bemoaning his fate at being obliged to make a thousand of them do for the several thousand people who have asked for invitations.



JULES CLARETIE IN HIS LIBRARY.
From "Nos Contemporains Chez Eux." Copyright by Dornac & Cie.

"Women have written me from everywhere; from all over Paris and the provinces," said M. Pingard when I saw him last. "I have three hundred places in the centre which go by right to the most beautiful women of Paris, but think of all it takes for the members of the various Academies, to say nothing of the twenty for the incoming member and all those for the director, and for the ministries, and for the administrations, and for everybody. What am I to do with all these other women? I shall set their beautiful eyes to weeping, and I shall not even have the consolation of wiping away their tears! And then there are the foreigners; the Americans, for instance, who have so much enterprise!" And M. Pingard went on to tell that one evening when he came in from the theatre about twelve o'clock, he was surprised to find drawn up before the door of the Institute a splendid carriage and pair. From it stepped a man, who said that he was an American and had received a card for the ceremony the next day. As he had understood it was necessary to be on hand at an extremely early hour in the morning in order to get a place, he had thought it simpler just to come and pass the night in the Court. He had pillows and food and everything that was necessary, he added. There was no tradition authorizing M. Pingard to let any one sleep all night in a carriage in the

court of the Institute, he was obliged to inform the enterprising traveler. "All that is necessary, my dear sir, is to send a good valet de chambre early in the morning to hold your place," he added, and the discomforted American drove away. He had probably heard of the mot of a stout gentleman who, after standing for several hours in line on the day of a solemnity at the Institute, exclaimed: "Vraiment il est moins facile d'entrer ici que d'y être reçu!"

I cannot imagine a more desolate place in which to pass a night. The Institute on ordinary occasions seems like some forgotten island in the great city, invincibly resisting the tide of advancement in ideas, modes and tastes which beats around it. You have even a material impression of this as you leave the elastic wooden pavement to enter its great, surly court, and tread upon the rough and unequal grés of the time of Louis XIV. which cover it. In one corner gigantic chimney pots twisting flame-like tongues of stone await, in order to take their places on the roof, some royal architect with sword and jabot who will never come. The very air there seems colder and more oppressive, and the rare passers-by who cut short the distance between the Quai Visconti and the Rue Mazarine by passing through the court hasten their steps until at the entrance,

near the studio of the engraver of medals, Chaplain, they come upon a beautiful old well of wrought iron, greening in summer with a panache of clematis, sole and unexpected smile in this temple of somnolent austerity.

On a reception day a spell comes over this sleeping palace. By five in the morning a line of white-capped bonnes, blue-bloused commissionaires, humble folk of every condition, has begun to form before it, each holding a card and keeping a place for its owner till the doors shall open at twelve. On the back of these a liveried attaché of the Academy has stamped a number; the only concession that the Institute will make to the modern demand for numbered places. The loungers of the Parisian crowd gather round them, and the special Academic beggars; for every Academician has his own particular beggar. Each adopts, as it were, an Academician. He knows the route of his great man, and never fails to be in his patron's path as he goes to the Institute, and "to pass the time of day." "Ah, Monsieur; all my compliments! How finely you are looking! I have never seen you in more magnificent health." Every beggar begs of his own Academician, and of no one else. Never the mendicant of Jules Claretie will ask anything of François Coppée, nor the beggar of Fran-

çois Coppée anything of Jules Claretie. "Why do you always address yourself to me and not to any of these other gentlemen?" Jules Claretie demanded one day of his shadow. "I haven't the honor of their acquaintance," the man answered, with dignity. For many years Jules Claretie had the same beggar. "I did what I could for him," said the famous director of the Français, "and the only time I hesitated was when—more ragged than Job—he asked me to give him an opportunity of assisting at a spectacle he had never seen—a Tuesday at the Comedy Française!"

About half-past eleven carriages emblazoned with old armorial bearings begin to line the quai before the Institute, and charmingly dressed women and distinguished men with red ribbons in their button-holes to fill the court-yard and to replace the long lines of waiting servants. Just as the stroke of twelve rings solemnly out, as it has rung so many time for a hundred years on such scenes, another liveried attaché appears at each of the doors with an enormous key. Five minutes later and every seat in the amphitheatre except those in the centre reserved for the three hundred most beautiful women of Paris and its greatest celebrities, are filled, and then everybody sits for an hour waiting for the ceremonies to begin.

The occasion is frigidly solemn. There is none of that bright gaiety about it, that air of a social function which hangs over first nights, or vanishing days, or any of the other gatherings of Tout-Paris. People talk in subdued whispers. Now and then there is a sort of suppressed murmur as some personage like the Princess Mathilde, or Madame Aubernon, or the "Countess Diane," or the beautiful Madame Gauthereau—an American, by the way—enters. At last the double rows of soldiers outside present arms. An imposing old gentleman in silk knickerbockers and a gold chain throws open the central door, and the Academicians, one by one, saunter in in their green coats embroidered with laurel leaves in silk, bow and smile to their friends, and sit down on the wooden benches covered with faded green velvet which have replaced the forty arm-chairs of the time of Louis XIV.

The first one of these ceremonies at which I ever assisted was one which, from the importance of the names interested in it, would have been characterized by M. Pingard as causing a "vrai délire." M. André Theuriet was received into the chair of M. Alexandre Dumas fils, and M. Paul Bourget replied to his address. M. Theuriet, a genial-looking little man who has apotheosized the simple life of country towns in genre pictures like

Dutch paintings, and written charming pastoral poems, read a discourse to prove that Alexandre Dumas fils was a precursor of Ibsen. That Dumas was the first person to introduce on the stage an "idealism militant," was his point; a theatre full of consciences which sought a rule of conduct from within and, after finding it, opposed it to social conventions. It was a good speech and so was Paul Bourget's psychological exposition of Dumas's methods and theories which followed. But as I listened to what Academicans made out of the two, I wondered whether, more than Ibsen, Alexander Dumas had meant to put into his pieces all that people got from them. Some one in Paris once asked Ibsen what was exactly the meaning of a certain passage in "Solness." "I'm sure I don't know," was the answer of the old dramatist. "I used to think that there were two sources from which people could find out what I meant in my plays, the bon Dieu and Ibsen. Now I've made up my mind that there's only one, and that's the bon Dieu."

It must be a strange feeling for the other Immortals to listen to these discourses and feel that some day some one will be making of each of them a "final and definite portrait," and that there is no way of escaping from it! This is a melancholy sensation, I am told,

and as to the incoming member, an unbroken chain of testimony goes to establish the fact that assuming this sort of immortality, gives a man one of the worst quarters of an hour of his life. Thiers, when he was received, was Minister of the Interior, and at such a height of political glory that he considered it beneath his dignity to make the traditional visits to the members to ask for their votes, and simply informed them of the honor he was disposed to confer upon the Academy in consenting to be elected. And yet he told Sardou that he had never known stage-fright in his life but once, and that was when he got up to read his speech.

We all know Emerson's remark upon the inward tranquility which comes to a woman from the consciousness of being perfectly well-dressed. In the same way there is nothing that can deal such a blow to the stoutest masculine courage as to be obliged to stand up for the first time in Academic costume before a fashionable audience; especially when "not by nature that way built," as the English said of Prince Henry of Battenburg when he donned the "breeks and kilt." The Academicians seldom have the façade of what they represent. They are generally elected at an age when they are beginning to take on embonpoint with their fireside habits and slippers; and the green coat embroidered with

laurel leaves after a design made a century ago by the painter David to please Napoleon, who loved panache as much as any boy and uniformed everybody around him, and the childish mother of pearl sword are not calculated to give ease of manner to many men, especially to those who have not kept young and slender figures.

Think of a person like Renan in such a dress, a man who seemed to waddle on his stomach—which you saw first—and then forgot instantly, the moment you caught sight of his charming smile, full of bonhomie and indulgence. He considered himself a martyr to the "habit vert," and he was the greatest martyr to it that ever lived. He spent grudgingly in the beginning the seven hundred and fifty francs for a complete outfit, and fancied that was the end of it. This was reckoning literally without his host. No sooner had he taken his seat than he began to grow stout, and he continued to increase in size with alarming rapidity. Each time he took out his embroidered coat and tried to put it on it seemed to have shrunk. At last he could just squeeze himself into it, but could no longer move his arms, and he suggested some enormous turtle, who, to keep his equilibrium, had been stood upon his hind legs. The tailor was sent for, for the twentieth time, but could do nothing more. The

Ready for School.

only thing, he said, was to order a new garment. The great philosopher did not propose to be daunted by a mere coat. "I say, my friend," he said to the tailor, with that winning charm which never failed to gain his audience, "like Berenger, I love my old coat. It would be a real grief for me to separate myself from it. You are a man of talent who knows all the secrets of his art. Would it not be possible to make some clever arrangement of this costume so as to give it back the elegance it has lost?" The tailor let himself be convinced, and accomplished miracles. Gores and biases were introduced into the back of M. Renan. The man of talent pieced out the linings, inflated the sleeves, lengthened the tails, changed the course of the embroideries. And M. Renan had the supreme satisfaction of dying without having been obliged to renew his Academic outfit.

The trials of Academicians must have been much greater in the old days when they wore their dress into society. Ampère, the famous chemist, used to tell an excellent story upon himself in this connection. He had gone to a soirée to lecture upon a subject very near his heart, and had so warmed up with his own eloquence as entirely to forget his surroundings. All at once a sudden consciousness of reality rushed over him, and he looked around to find, to his astonishment,

that the room was entirely empty except for a single person: the mistress of the house tranquilly asleep on a sofa before him. The most delicate thing to do appeared to the Academician to slip out quietly, without waking her, but as ill-luck would have it, it so happened that exactly between the woman's back and the cushion was the savant's sword, which he had put there so as to be more at ease while talking. The excellent Ampère tiptoed over to the sofa, and, kneeling down, tried to withdraw this softly without disturbing his fair friend. Suddenly, to his horror, the blade came away, while the sheath stayed, and meanwhile the sleeper awoke and began to scream loudly at seeing Ampère, the peaceful Ampère, on his knees before her, brandishing a naked sword. Everything was explained, but you can fancy how Paris laughed the next day.

For that matter, what would she do without the perpetual chain of Academic jokes which has not once failed her for several hundred years? Pailleron was admitted to the Academy only on his play, "Le Monde où l'on s'ennuie," which made people laugh over one of the Academic salons, Madame Aubernon de Nerville's; and the celebrated Renan story of this same house—how at dinner Madame de Nerville rang a little bell when an Academician was about to speak, and how, when

silence was made for Renan, he asked for some more peas—has been served up with all the vegetables, in all languages.

Another house of the same sort is evidently conducted upon the same principle. On the mantel-piece in the dining-room is this inscription: "At a repast in which Joinville figured with the King St. Louis, a clerk spoke in a low tone to his neighbor. The king said to him: 'Why do you speak thus? Either what you say presents some interest and, therefore, we should all extract some profit from it, or it is only vain words, and then it were better to keep silent!' "

Stories of the celebrated Oppert are a fruitful source of entertainment for Paris. He is the original of the famous scene in Anatole France's "Le Lys Rouge"—book with a key—between the philologist Schmoll, "who knew all the languages except the French," and Marmet, whose unique study was the Etruscan tongue, "of which neither he nor any one else had ever succeeded in learning a line." The two savants perpetually quarrelled, and especially on the subject of the Latin writers, which Marmet insisted on quoting, and wrongly. One day they met on the steps of the Institute, and Schmoll put out his hand. "I don't know you, sir," said Marmet. "Do you take me for a Latin inscription, then?" retorted Schmoll. In the original

scene the mot was still more amusing, "You must take me, then, for a cuneiform!"

I myself once had the rare good fortune to be present at a delicious scene in an Academic salon. It was at a soirée where one of the guests was a Chinese prince, in a splendid robe of yellow silk, and another an Academician, as absent-minded as he was learned. I saw the latter overturn a jardinière. A tremendous crash resounded through the rooms, and everybody, rushing to the spot from which it came, found the fragments of porcelain lying upon the floor, the plant broken, its earth scattered, and, conspicuously near, two individuals, the absent-minded Academician and the Chinese in his robe of yellow silk. It must have been one of those moments for an Immortal when mortal temptations assailed him sorely. Only a glance, a raising of the eye-lids, and the brunt of that story would be laid forever on a Chinese robe, instead of remaining as a heavy weight for life in the baggage of an Immortal. Every man has his price, and this one had his. In a few moments "C'était le Chinois!" circulated rapidly through the rooms.

These different tales have carried me quite out of the Academie Française into the other Academies, for Oppert is a member of the Academie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres, and Ampère belonged to the Academie des

Sciences; the two Academies of which we hear least, and yet which are worth more than any of the others. If the case of the Institute as a government institution were to be plead, entirely outside of the individual value of any of its members, who have many of them rendered so much service to progress as to be beyond criticism, it could easily be proved that the two branches I have just named, to which should be added the Academie des Sciences morales et politiques, founded only fifty years ago, were of the greatest value and usefulness. They are societies of savants renowned for their knowledge of science, of antiquity, and their deep researches in social and political economy. Simply because they are organized by the State, which gives them to the crowd a stupid air of apparently claiming to hold the monopoly of genuine science, patented, their members pass for being conceited and exclusive. As a matter of fact they are just the opposite; as they prove by attaching to themselves as corresponding members pretty much all the savants of the world, and in encouraging, by the numerous prizes of which they dispose, an enormous number of students whose work otherwise would run the risk of being refused by publishers, and remaining fruitless.

By the side of these the Academie Française, as I think I have shown, is, on the con-

trary, of no real use. I am not sure, however, but that the great mass of the French, with their love for materializing things, would feel as though esprit and letters were dead unless they sometimes saw them tangibly incarnated in green coats and cocked hats. These make an excellent effect, too, in processions. Some of them are always detailed for every official ceremony. And probably it is a good thing to give to forty gentlemen a means of never growing old by setting them a perpetual task which will never be finished, such as that of revising the French dictionary. It prevents them from saying with one of their compatriots of a certain respectable age: "The gout has bestowed upon me the arm-chair the Academy has never been willing to give me!"

But the Academie des Beaux Arts as an institution positively does harm. In its very composition there is an irreparable defect. This is that even its youngest members are getting on toward sixty. It is known that outside of a few rare exceptions, Henner, for instance, or Puvis de Chavannes, who did not belong to the Institute, an artist loses little by little, with age, his power of imagination, his surety of hand, his clearness of vision; and what is more serious still, his ideal and his taste are always of the time when he had his greatest successes. So the painters, the sculp-

tors, the architects, the engravers, and the musicians of the Institute who form the Academie des Beaux Arts are and always will be twenty or thirty years behind the contemporary movement in art. Instead of contributing to its progress they retard it. Not only do they absorb a large part of the orders given by the State, but they are the principal judges of those which are given to others. It is they who are the professors at the École des Beaux Arts, and finally, and above everything else, they distribute every year an enormous quantity of prizes in money which they give only to those disciples who bend themselves to their taste; very often, unfortunately, against all their own tendencies. The result of this shows itself with special force in the annual competitions for the Prix de Rome. You see there any number of young men who have spent their time doing nothing but making imitations of Bonnat, Bouguereau, Hébert, Laurens, Falguière, Mercié, Pascal, Chaplain, Massenet, Reyer, simply because to compete for a prize, or, as it is called, "monter en loge," will give them a subsidy which will let them live a whole year. During the last twenty years, out of all the laureates of this melancholy Prix de Rome, a single one, Besnard, after having his personality enslaved during the best years of his youth, has been able to get it back;

something indispensable for any really fine work of art.

I say for twenty years, I might say for two hundred and fifty years, from the time that the Academie des Beaux Arts has existed. More than a century ago the great painter David cried to the members of the National Convention: "Talents lost to posterity! Great men, misunderstood! I will quiet your disdained shades. Victims of Academies, you shall be avenged for your misfortunes. In the name of humanity, in the name of patriotism, by your love for art, and above all by your love for youth, destroy these fatal Academies which can no longer exist under a free régime."

And free America, whose youth with its splendid initiative has never yet known what it was to be enslaved and trammeled by worn-out traditions, would have a "Prix de Paris!"

# *The Comedie Francaise.*

"I drink to Molière," said M. Jules Claretie one evening recently, "to Molière and his excellent servitors. It was he who, under Louis XIV., through propagating socialism of the best sort — co-operation and fraternity— founded this admirable house, so solid and so durable. I hope that it may last as long as our dear France herself, for it is one of the jewels of the *patrie*."

That night after the curtain was lowered on the performance at the Theatre Francais the scene-shifters drew over it, on the stage side, a canvas representing a scene from a salon. In the center they hung a portrait of Molière. The stage itself was arranged as in the last act of the "Marriage du Figaro." At one end they placed the poet's bust, and before that a large table and five small ones, all beautifully arranged for a supper. In the place of honor at the large table M. Claretie, director of the theatre, seated himself at one o'clock with the sociétaires and pensionnaires around him. There was none of that precedence on that occasion which ordinarily rules the Français as rigidly as a court. At M. Claretie's right was

Mme. Baretta, the *doyenne* of the sociétaires, and on his left Mlle. Geniat, the youngest pensionnaire. Thus, for the first time in the histor of the theatre, the whole Comédie partook of a real supper together on the stage in honor of the birthday of Molière, and thus founded a new tradition in that celebrated old house. "I drink to the one-hundredth supper to Molière," the director said in ending his toast; "to his house, which is also the house of Corneille, Racine and Victor Hugo; to Molière and his grandchildren, and to the future of the Comédie Française."

When I think of the social life of Paris, Molière's birthday parties come up to me as one of its features. Many a time I have helped at the celebration of one of these in a specially arranged performance at the Français, ending with the crowning of the poet's bust. Most of all, however, I think the Molière afternoons on Mardi Gras delight me. The world is en fête, and one of the most charming things about it is the children at the Français. You see whole families there together, and the foyer between the acts is a garden of small folk, exquisitely mannered little creatures, conducting themselves exactly like little men and women. Nowhere can you see an audience more finely representative of the best French people than at the Français on the afternoon of Mardi Gras. When Paris has given herself

up with particular zest to the spirit of the day what a strange experience it is to come out into the bizarre carnival world; trees hung with long, blue, green, yellow, red and violet serpentine streamers, ground soft to the feet with multi-colored confetti, and even people red, blue, green, violet and yellow, in the same way. What if the world had been made like that in the beginning I have sometimes thought? What kind of ideas should we have —red, blue, green, violet and yellow? Carnival is indelibly associated in my mind with the souvenir of Molière.

This theatre calls itself the House of Molière and calls him its ancestor, but it really goes back much farther than to his day. The first theatre in Paris was founded not long after the massacre of St. Bartholomew, when a company of strolling comedians came and established themselves in the old city and founded the Theatre du Marais. In the time of Louis XIV. Paris had three theatres. The grand monarch united the two principal companies and made them an official troupe, "in order," he said, "that the representations of the comedians might be more perfect." For a hundred years or so they moved about from one house to another. Now we find them in the Palais Royal, now in a tennis court standing on what is to-day the Passage du Pont Neuf, for twelve years in the Tuileries. In 1782 the troupe of

the Comédie went to the present Odéon, and there it stayed until the Revolution, when it was suppressed and its actors imprisoned. Napoleon, as first consul, reorganized it, and established it in its present home in the Rue de Richelieu, where it has remained ever since.

It was Louis XIV., we see, who was its actual founder. He it was who had the idea of making it a co-operative association, and establishing pensions for retiring members. On this is based the fundamental principle of the Français, the institution of two classes of actors: sociétaires who are co-partners with the theatre, have a voice in its government, in the choice of the plays, a share in the yearly profits, and retire with a pension; and pensionnaires engaged by the year at a fixed salary, with the prospect of being elected sociétaires after a certain probation. This was part of the vast scheme of centralization of Louis XIV., of his plan for organizing not only the arts, but literature, and personifying them in grand institutions. But, though it is true that he gave the Comédie durability and a material existence, as M. Regnier, one of its historians and a former sociétaire, wrote, the great poet gave it his glory and his name, "which in times of danger has proved more efficacious than contracts and regulations in protecting the House of Molière."

Even to-day it is the name of the great com-

Foyer of the Théâtre Français.

The Théâtre Français (recently burned).

edian which holds the house together. The Comédie Française, wherever it has been, has given a durable and stable home for two centuries to that drama for which the French have such a passionate love, and Molière has always been the master of it. *"Salue au Monsieur,"* one of my friends heard the coachman of a Paris cab say, lifting his hat as he passed the statue of Molière in the Rue de Richelieu. And he is a Monsieur to-day to all the citizens of France, even the humblest. He remains ever modern, because, while he exposes the eternal hypocrisies and stupidity of human nature, he so holds them up to ridicule that he is a perpetual solace for the pettiness of daily life.

M. Claretie might have said more in his toast, for the Français is not only one of the jewels of France, but far more, perhaps, than the French themselves imagine, it seems to me one of the fundamental stones upon which rests all the real prestige of French life. It has a unique place in the world. Do away with the French opera, there would be plenty of places in other countries where you could hear good music, and good French music, just as well. Suppress the Louvre, yet scattered about in other museums would be enough treasures to form a collection which would give you exactly the same pleasure you get now from those in the old palace of the kings

of France. But the stage of the Comédie Française, over which the State has so jealously watched for two hundred years and seen that three times a week at least were played some of the chef d'œuvres of the French tongue, has an entirely different place in Paris from the other theatres, the museums, the art galleries, or the schools. It is a *musèe parlant*, a living history of French esprit, French manners, and the French conception of life for over two hundred years. People go there to be amused and are amused, and unconsciously they come away refreshed and stimulated by the emotions that have been aroused by the fine and lofty thought whose spell they have been under, expressed with so much suppleness and brilliancy in the beautiful old tongue spoken in the fifteenth century by Racine, Corneille and Molière. Far more than the Parisians themselves imagine, especially in respect to the lower classes, I am satisfied that it is to this theatre, which is not only a museum of classic literature and an ever-open history, but is at the same time a school of manners and taste, that they owe the superiority in certain directions they have kept for so long. All the Parisians certainly do not go even once a year to the Français, but enough do go of all classes to make the great masters of drama, who in other days were at the same time the great

masters of thought and of the art of speaking well, real and popular with everyone.

Happy the people who have the means for getting such a national education. Some of them might prefer the happiness apostrophized by Voltaire: "Happy the people whose annals are tiresome;" and I am not sure that the Republican Government in its entirety altogether appreciates its singular good fortune in this respect. No doubt, when it comes time to vote the annual appropriations some of the Socialist deputies grumble over that 240,000 francs to the Comédie Française, which is the only way of assuring the official existence of the theatre and giving to the State the right to see that the old repertory is played so many times every week. As a matter of fact, no public expenditure is less of a luxury or more important, and this must have been the opinion of that great intelligence, Napoleon, when he sent back from the depths of Russia the laws which still nominally regulate the Français under the celebrated name of the "Decree of Moscow."

What actually governs it, however, is a mass of traditions and precedents. "It is like an old house," M. Francisque Sarcey said to me once in talking about it, "which holds together, nobody knows how. Put in one wedge and the whole thing will go to pieces. The director and the actors and everybody are al-

ways differing and quarreling; but they always end by some sort of a compromise, and the theatre goes on, no one knows how. Nothing of the kind could ever be set up nowadays. To have anything like it you would have to lay the foundation, and then be willing to wait two hundred years for the result. And then, you see, the theatre and the Constitution developed simultaneously."

What an old, old thing the drama seems, to be sure, the first time you go there! You feel as though the Greek plays, like Antigone or Œdipus, had simply been going on for three thousand years. As I enter under its dusky dome I always feel as though I was entering into the presence of the drama, something visible and palpable. Madame Alphonse Daudet, in "The Childhood of a Parisian," tells how, when she was a little girl, she used to see *la gloire*. It was in the person of a thin, slight old man, a general, who sat by the fireside and so talked of his battles and the glory of them, and so personified this by his personality, that to the child he was *la gloire*. At any rate, the Français makes the drama splendid through all the art treasures which its evolution had comprised. You see that the works of the great artists of all the ages give it dignity, even in its smallest details. Look, for instance, at the collection of walking sticks for the *grand seigneurs* and the *petits marquis* of the time of

Molière, dating from his day, with their handles of gold, wrought with art by the best orfevres of the day, and encrusted with precious stones. Here is one of the first specimens of piano-making, in one corner of the greenroom. It is an old spinet, signed: "*Sebastian Erard et Frère. Compag. Privilegiee du Roi. Rue du Mail No. 27 a Paris, 1790.*" It was a specimen for a museum, and for nearly a century it had served in "The Barber of Seville."

Even the bells of the theatre are celebrated. It was one of them which actually tolled out the signal for the Massacre of St. Bartholomew from the belfry of St. Germain l'Auxerrois. Joseph Chénier secured it for the Français, and it is now used to give the signal for the massacre in the play of Charles IX.

The store-rooms of the old theatre, the one that was burned, could not contain its wonderful collection of beautiful Louis XIV. and Louis XVI. and Empire furniture, all perfect specimens of the very purest style, dating from the epoch, or the specimens of old furniture of all the styles; and they overflowed with marvellous tapestries and embroideries, with old mirrors, silver service, bronzes, clocks, candelabra, lamps. The Français had the finest arsenal in the world. Even the things in what is called "the small property room" would have done credit to a museum. The flowerpots, feather dusters, tragic and comic masks,

inkstands and other writing materials, all the thousand and one little things required in a play, were antiques, and each had its history.

The old Français was crammed with art treasures, most of which were saved. The green-room and the public foyer were galleries in which you found specimens of all the best artists of the seventeenth century. The vaulted vestibule was peopled with statues, the staircase was lined with marble caryatides; in front of each of the fluted pilasters that separated the panels of the foyer was a pedestal holding a bust signed by a celebrated name like Houdon, or Caffieri. In every passage and every room of the house there are pictures, busts, engravings, and a wealth of historical souvenirs.

Long familiarity with the Français led you to mingle a certain discriminating reserve with the first burst of awed admiration with which you viewed many of these treasures. I could not admire the vestibule, with its Doric columns, nor the two great statues of Tragedy and Comedy which adorned it, all made in the Second Empire, that odious epoch of art when nobody could think of any other way of representing antiquity than by a female figure wearing bandeaux of hair and a chignon. Then, too, the great fireplace in the public foyer was "pompier"—to use that invaluable slang word from the Paris studios used to characterize art

MOUNET-SULLY IN HIS LIBRARY.
From "Nos Contemporains Chez Eux," Copyright by Dornac & Cie.

which suggests the Second Empire pictures in which the men wore helmets like those of the Paris "pompiers," or firemen—and the ceiling by Dubufe *fils*, a painter as uninteresting as he is fecund, made you think more than anything else of the salon of an enriched bourgeois. But the statue of Voltaire, in the place of honor at the end, was regarded one of the finest statues that Houdon ever made. And could anything be more lovely than some of the busts on the pedestals between the fluted columns, all of which were saved? The Caffieris alone are some of the most perfect gems of sculpture in existence. These are the things that make you appreciate the wonderful treasures the Comèdie possesses.

You might almost have taken for a curio the little man on the landing standing on watch over a door, as ugly as a gnome, and so old that he seemed to date from the creation of the house. He wore round his neck a silver chain, like his colleagues in the antichamber of a Ministry, and, like them, he is a functionary and there for life.

On the other side of him was the mysterious and enchanted world of the artists, for the drama still inhabited this old museum, and human beings at stated intervals moved and walked and talked just as human beings moved and walked over two hundred years ago, and they said the same words.

How could any actors ever live up to the place, and what is more, keep it alive? The Comédie Français still gives the most generally satisfactory entertainment in the world, in spite of the fact that you no longer go there to hear the most remarkable actors in Paris, and you rarely find there the best of the new plays. Nevertheless, the old house was packed every night of the year, both winter and summer. That, too, in spite of the loss of so many great names; in spite of the death of Regnier, the retirement of Got and Le Fébvre, the defection of Coquelin and Sarah Bernhardt with their new theatres—Coquelin with the phenomenal success of "Cyrano" at the Porte St. Martin—of the retirement of Madeleine Brohan and Reichemberg.

But the value of the individual actor is of small importance at the Comédie. Only the pupils who graduate with the highest honors from the Conservatoire are allowed to make a début there, and all of these have been so trained that they are prepared to fit into the general harmony. The troupe is, and always will be, remarkably homogeneous in the rôles of the ancient repertoire. It is sufficient for this that each member take care to respect the tradition which has been handed down without interruption from the time when the authors themselves lived; and whether he or she be

more or less brilliant is a matter of small importance to the public who goes to listen to Tartuffe, les Fourberies de Scapin, Andromaque, or the Cid. It is even a drawback to the general excellence to find an actor who asserts his individuality at the expense of the ensemble. "M. Mounet-Sully, a little less genius, if you please," Emile Augier said one day at a rehearsal. What we particularly notice there is the way the geniuses play down to the mediocrities.

All this in no way diminishes the individual value of the troupe. But, now that there are so many theatres in Paris, the fifty-two actors of the Comédie do not make up the half of those who are favorites with the public, and I am not at all sure that even its greatest stars would shine with the same brilliancy in a less aristocratic house, where the aim was more to find something new than to preserve old traditions. Lebargy, the *jeune premier*, famous for his cravats and his chic, the man who set whole torrents of printer's ink flowing simply with the menace to resign his position, would have somewhat of a disillusioning, I fear, if he left and tried to dispute with Guitry the only place at all adapted to him, at the Vaudeville. Lebargy is made for the correct Lavedan of *Catherine*, or the serious Donnay of *Le Torrent*, plays written by men with visions of the Academy in the distance. He would lack entirely

the *fougue*, the audacity and the passion which Guitry put into the Donnay of *Les Amants* and *l'Amoureuses*, or the Lavedan of *Les Viveurs*. That Guitry is going to the Français as soon as his engagement at the Vaudeville is finished, is the most important fact of this last year in the theatrical world. It is an excellent thing for that theatre; less so, perhaps, for Guitry.

Take some of the other leading actors of the Comédie, Hernandi Mounet-Sully, for instance, a tragedian of such remarkable power in Œdipe; but who can imagine him trying to take Antoine's place in Hauptmann's *Les Tisserands*, or *La Nouvelle Idole* by Curel, the only pieces in which the drama is of a character sufficiently elevated for him?

Silvain is admirable in classic tragedy, but this is only played now in Paris at the Français or at the Odéon, which is a sort of annex to the former. Coquelin cadet, and even Feraudy, would certainly not equal Baron and Brasseur in *Le Vieux Marcheur* or the *La Dame de chez Maxim*, at the Nouveauté or Variétés. And certainly, neither Bartet nor Marsy nor Baretta could rival Réjane, Sarah Bernhardt, Granier, or even Jane Hading.

The fact that the Comédie holds its own so in Paris, I think, must in one way be a proof that this principle of general excellence is the real ideal of the theatre. And yet, it cannot

SARAH BERNHARDT.
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be the only ideal. All the Paris theatres, the Vaudeville, the Gymnase, the Variétés. the Palais-Royal, the Renaissance, the Porte St. Martin, the Nouveautés, the Théatre Antoine, have their reason for being at a time like this, when literature principally takes the form of the novel, and when dramatic art, secondary for the moment, is constantly seeking under the form of naturalist plays, psychological plays, plays with a purpose, satirical plays, socialistic plays, some final and definite form. The Comédie Française will always be inferior in this sort of research, where each style monopolizes a *genre*. It can only accept timidly a novelty, for it has the responsibility of fixing what shall become classic—as the famous dictionary of the Academicians decides what words shall pass into and become part of the language.

It is not from this stage that will come the Renaissance of French dramatic art. But it remains the most splendid personification of dramatic art that can be imagined. *La litterature habillée* promenading about Paris in the person of an academician has something ridiculously incongruous about it, but how the drama lends itself to the part! You should see Delaunay walking across the St. Lazare railway station, on his way to his home at Versailles. All his life he has been a "*jeune premier*," and now, though he is over seventy

years old and retired, he still keeps on playing his favorite rôle, with his white hair as carefully dressed as though it were powdered, his chest thrown out and limb straightened, he is not exactly the Perdican or the Fortunio of Alfred de Musset, which once upon a time bored so many pretty women, but the gallant maréchal de Richelieu of Alexandre Dumas *père*, who only eight years ago still climbed lightly over the balcony of Mlle. de Belle Isle. Such he is for those who meet him, and such he is for himself. In a room in his house he has hung all the costumes which he rendered illustrious; the brilliant *defroques* of the marquises of Molière, and he regrets not to have been able to die in one of these, like Molière in the robe de chambre of the *Malade Imaginaire*, on the field of honor.

And the charming and witty Madeleine de Brohan, who left the stage in the very height of her reputation. She gave up playing the rôles of young girls one day when in, I don't remember which play, the words, "Ernestine, I love you," said to her brusquely, shocked her like an anachronism; and an incident of the same sort decided her to give up playing altogether. Those who see her intimately in her little apartment in the Rue de Rivoli, looking over the garden of the Tuileries, say that she is still the Madeleine Brohan of the old days, with her heart always in her theatre; and she

is even to be found sitting in the same position that she always took in the foyer of the Comédie, with her work-box on a chair, whose back formed a sort of rampart before her, as though to keep off bores. Her god-child, Reichemberg, the "*petite doyenne*," has followed her example, and only a year or two ago, in '98, retired also. Another Parisian event is the retirement of a sociétaire. That night he or she owns the theatre, arranges the programme as they please, sell the seats at any price they wish. For Reichemberg's *soirée d'adieu*, Duse came on from Bologna to play the last act of Adrienne Lecouvreur, and as distinctly a Parisian sight as could be imagined was the little *doyenne's* loge that night; the loge which was once Rachel's, with Mlle. Reichemberg in the little gray dress and white guimpe she had worn as Agnes, in the midst of her lilacs, her camelias, her orchids, her ribbons, her gilded baskets, seemed, as M. Claretie put it, like the corolla of some gigantic flower herself.

The sociétaries of the Français, when they retire, are always sure not only of a little income, but a little capital, for only half their share in the profits of the theatre is paid to them each year. The rest is invested, and given them on their retirement. The singers of the Opéra retire in the same way, and, oddly enough, while they have a special fancy for

the real country, like Bois-Colombes, the actors always choose either Versailles or even Neuilly or Asnieres. Evidently they are so accustomed to country scenes of painted canvas that villas and paved streets of the environments of Paris give them sufficiently the illusion of country. And then, they love the crowd, and can never bear to be shut off from it, or far away from that theatre which during all the best years of their life was the scene of their struggles and their successes. I think the actors of the Français keep the old prestige more than even rank and title nowadays.

The foyer of the Français has always been one of the most brilliant salons in France. One great actress after another has held her court there like a sovereign. Kings, princes, dukes, generals, all that the world counts most distinguished in politics, art or letters, have filed through it. It has seen the ovations made to great dramatists after their wonderful successes—has seen Victor Hugo acclaimed, and Alexandre Dumas *fils* with the tears rolling down his cheeks in the midst of the wild enthusiasm of the first nights of *Denise* and *Francillon*. Times have changed. The etiquette which once ruled the foyer is one of the things that has disappeared. In the old days, while you saw the actresses comfortably settled with their crochet or their tapestry, waiting till the *regisseur* should come to tell Camille

THE ELDER COQUELIN.
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that Horace was ready to give her the fatal stroke of the sword, or Celiméne that the Misanthrope waited, to tell her that her coquetry had determined him to leave the world, no visitor could appear but in a dress suit. Lately one of my friends tells me that he has seen a bicyclist in the foyer.

The conversation is no less brilliant, however; it is the light banter and witty repartée of people accustomed to the theatre and its *mots à effet*. Here are a few bits which have come to me from time to time—women do not go to the foyer—trivialities, but specimens of that sort of quick French repartée, which is so peculiarly French:

"Mme. X., I hear, is giving a large dinner this evening?"

"Yes; I saw the oysters going in under the door as I came by."

* * * *

"What, leaving already?"

"Yes; I promised to go to supper with Sarah."

"Oh, yes, that's so; it is Friday; *vous faites maigre*."

* * * *

"Just fancy, my dear, Chevet asked me ten francs for a *botte* (bunch—boot) of asparagus!"

"Was it wearing then a golden spur?"

* * * *

"Mlle. Chose is very hoarse to-night. The public scarcely applauded her at all."

"*C' a' n'est pas juste; elle à la voix du peuple.*"

* * * *

"*Y. touché à la caisse quinze mille francs pour son lever du rideau.*"

"*On a eu tort de lui donner tant de monnaie pour une mauvaise piece!*"

* * * *

Mlle. Z., coming from her loge: "Just fancy! Mme. W. insisted on coming into my loge. She cried, '*Ouvrez, ouvrez moi donc!*'" "And then?" "And then I answered, 'Do you take me for an oyster opener?'"

* * * *

In another part of the foyer Silvain talks of his birds, Mounet-Sully of his bicyclette, Rachel Boyer of her automobile, Truffier of his writing—all these princes of the Comédie and all of these great *amoureuses* of the drama are after all, *bons bourgeois.*

# *French Homes.*

It is not an easy thing to generalize about homes anywhere, but one general statement can certainly be made of those in France; they are what the foreigner knows the least about of anything in the country. The French have a great love for home, even though, as we are fond of saying, they have no such word in their language. "Foyer" replaces it, but you never hear them talk familiarly about their foyers. They say, "*Je vais a la maison*"—"I am going to the house," and they speak of their "interiors," but neither of these expressions is the equivalent of our word home.

I always think perhaps they have no satisfactory word for it because no one word could ever express all the conditions which the idea must contain to them. They seem to put into it some of the literal feeling that an old colored mammy I once knew had when she found out what l-o-v-e spelled. "Mighty poah way to spell love, 'cordin's I knows it," she said; "on'y just foah letters!" The English idea of home is an abstraction, and almost any symbol would express it. They can take out a tea kettle at five o'clock in the afternoon in any spot of the

globe where they may happen to be, and as they watch the steam mount from this emblem of their altars and their fires, it is a little Britain and it is home. But home to the French is something concrete and material. It is some particular spot in some particular house, in which are installed the exact traditions attached to their idea of their own particular family. They are devoted to this. They never want to leave it, and when they go away in the summer it is always to set up somewhere just such another home, exactly like the one they have left. You rarely find the best French people in hotels or boarding-houses. The responsibility of keeping up these particular traditions is probably one reason why they put a little sort of Chinese wall around their interiors, within which the foreigner is rarely invited. These homes must not be modified nor disturbed by the profane touch.

This explains the fact that we know so little about French life. Paris is a city within a city, one of which is real and the other artificial. Its show places, its show dressmakers, half its life, exist only for the stranger. Its Tout-Paris is nothing but a heterogeneous collection of the smart sets of all countries and all nations, who make up an artificial and cosmopolitan society like that of any great capital, and therefore as little typical of their own. But these are the only peo-

ple we ever hear about. Realistic novelists have to go to them for their situations, and it is only from them that journalists can get their sensations. This is by no means peculiar to Paris, but there is this difference between it and London or New York. Any extravagant thing we read of in these other places falls upon a background made up of our exact knowledge of what the country really is, and so we immediately give it its proper value; while in France we know so little about the best types of people that nothing has its real perspective.

Almost all the writers who have made any study of French life speak of this; men like Mr. Hamerton, Mr. Brownell, Mr. Theodore Child. One thing that Mr. Child wrote about the false values given to facts by newspapers constantly comes back to me. Their readers, he said, did not remember that a journalist valued a fact not by virtue of its importance, but of its novelty. From year's end to year's end a million and a half of people worked in Paris ten to twelve hours a day; an important fact, but not new, and so the newspapers did not mention it. A score of politicians met and drew up a crazy manifesto, and immediately the fact, being new, was telegraphed to the ends of the earth. Then when the man who read the newspapers came to Paris and got more exact notions of reality he made himself conversationally tiresome and

impaired his digestion in marveling at the calmness of the population, the activity of business of all kinds, and the prosperity of the city in general.

During the ten or twelve years that I have known the French capital I have never seen it anything but calm, active and prosperous; but every now and then a letter, or sometimes a cable from an interested family, begging me to go into the streets with precaution and to take no unnecessary risks, tells me that somebody in some obscure part of the town has again been drawing up a crazy manifesto, and that to the other side of the water we are, as usual, on the verge of a revolution. When the other side brings its preconceived ideas of French life over, it seldom gets an opportunity for comparing them with any object-lessons, and therefore they never change. They seldom meet French familias of their own class in America, and even if they did, it would be difficult for them to know much about the ideas and standards of its members, since they could not carry on for fifteen minutes a general conversation in any language common to all.

The fact is, that while everything we hear about Paris is true, it is only part of the truth. The typical life of France is in its bourgeoisie, and this the outsider seldom reads about, and still less meets.

I am afraid that the word does not sound

interesting, but the bourgeoisie is of two kinds, the petite and the haute. The "petite bourgeoisie," is made up of the mass of worthy but uninteresting families, shopkeepers, modest functionaries, people living on tiny incomes, who lead a pot-au-feu existence bounded by their own little interests. They take no part in any intellectual movement, and their sole ambition is to put by a little money each year for their children. They are, nevertheless, the economic force of France. It is from them that the country got in a few days twelve times the five milliards demanded by Germany as indemnity of war.

The "haute bourgeoisie," on the other hand, includes the intellectual class of France; those families who consider a classical education the most necessary of possessions, and think it a duty to take an interest in every intellectual movement—in art, science and letters. You find in it the professors, the artists, the writers, the physicians, the engineers, every class in which personal value ranks above either name or fortune. The haute bourgeoisie Française is the moral force of the nation; the haute bourgeoisie Parisienne is to-day the real aristocracy of the Republic. It does not, however, strictly speaking, mean a class. It means people having a certain common état d'esprit; a certain common view and conduct of life. A noble may be a bourgeois, and often is.

I do not know how I can better illustrate this than by describing two families among my French friends whom I have known intimately for a long time, who seem to me, each in their way, typical of the haute bourgeoisie and of its finest characteristics. One is the family of a professor. The husband is a self-made man, the grandson of a simple mason, who has made his position entirely by his brains. He graduated with high honors from the Ecole Normale Supérieure, a special college in Paris for professors, in which only twenty-five pupils are admitted a year. Then he spent three years at the French school for the preparation of high professors at Rome, and almost immediately after finishing there was appointed "professor of the Faculty." That is to say, through public lectures he prepares high instructors in his turn. This is the highest university title in France. It brings him in from seven to nine thousand francs a year. At twenty-eight he married a charming girl without a large dot, but of a fine family, the daughter of a distinguished public man, noted for his breadth of mind and high character.

Both these young people knew when they married that their income would never exceed fifteen thousand francs at the outside. This in Paris, an expensive capital, meant looking forward to a life governed by the strictest economy. With the four children that have

come to them in eleven years it has turned into a life of privation. They have accepted it gaily, and have as ideally happy a home as I know of anywhere. What makes it typical is that all its happiness and ambition lies in intangible things. They live in a quaint little house with a garden near the Panthéon. Of mornings the husband goes off to his lectures, while his wife keeps the house with that exquisite economy which is one of the things about France where our preconceived ideas have not played us false. She makes nearly all the children's clothes and her own with the aid of her little housemaid, and directs the children's education with that extreme care which forces itself upon us as one of the most conspicuous characteristics of French home life. The saying is, A French mother knows every hour of her daughter's life. A French mother and father know every step of their children's education. It is the mother herself, in the professor's family, who takes the children to their *cours*. All this does not prevent her from finding the time to go now and then into society—de se montrer dans le monde—where you see her charmingly dressed, in perfect taste. At night husband and wife always dine together, and afterward read aloud for an hour or so. Nevertheless, the husband manages to write for the reviews and compete for the

prizes offered by the Institute, making in this way the summer outing—a house in the Pyrenees—and a little sum put by each year for the dot of the daughters. On Saturday evenings they are "at home." You hear excellent music in their little salon and delightful conversation, since nearly all the people who drop in to discuss literature, science and art over a tea-table belong to the university world.

The other people are artists, both husband and wife, and from the French standpoint have money. That is to say, between them they have a private income of thirty thousand francs, which will be doubled on the death of their parents, and as much is added to it every year by the sale of the husband's pictures. He is one of the most distinguished of the young painters of the Champs de Mars salon, and an example of that remarkable versatility which you find so often in cultivated Frenchmen. Before he began to paint he wrote, and won instant recognition through his short stories. His wife also paints. She is what is called a rare esprit, a brilliant aquarelliste, who exhibits every year in the Champs de Mars, and an excellent musician.

What makes this family typical is that, with money, they choose to adopt a standard of life whose aims lie in intangible things just as much as the professor and his wife, whose means are so limited. The wife, who could give over to

others much of the care of the house and the education of the children, chooses to look after both in precisely the same way as in the other home. Both she and her husband, who could live lives of leisure, give themselves up to the most unremitting work. His ambition is to create art; to hand down the artistic inheritance he has received, and add to it something of his own. So he works unceasingly, and his wife is his invaluable, if silent, partner. Never a picture is sketched on the canvas that has not been thoroughly discussed with her. It is she, too, who is her husband's inspiration, who gives him courage in the moments of discouragement which come to every artist. Their luxuries are in adding now and then a fine tapestry or a beautiful piece of old furniture to their home, which is arranged with exquisite taste, and in taking every year a summer trip before they settle down to the old house in Brittany from which the husband has got so many of his best subjects.

It is easy to see from these two examples the underlying principles upon which the bourgeoisie is based. I know many individual instances like them in America, but I do not know of any whole class of people all having a similar standard and manner of life. You can sum up the distinguishing characteristics of the best French families in one sentence, which will apply to all. This is a common

and exactly defined conception, which has been handed down from generation to generation, of duty; to work, to live within your income without touching the capital, to put by something every year for your children, to watch personally over their manners and development, and to give them the finest possible education. This is what makes a family, according to the French idea. And these people make up the real France. Her economic wealth does not come so much from individual fortunes as from the small economies of the masses, and so her great artistic, scientific and literary movement is not carried on so much by the talent of single individuals as by the vast accumulation of methodical and often obscure efforts which keep the intellectual atmosphere so overcharged that every now and then flashes from it a luminous spark known by some such name as Pasteur, Puvis de Chavannes, Renan, Guy de Maupassant. All these men were bourgeois, sons of bourgeois, direct descendants of that Tiers État which made the French revolution.

It is this very bourgeoisie which is so much attacked at present, both from within and without; and I am aware that a society whose finest expression tends towards the obscure efforts of the masses rather than to the brilliant initiative of individuals is slenderly equipped for keeping its material preëminence in the

Cozy Corner in a French Home.

A French Home.

struggle for fame and power of the Nineteenth Century. But from this comes the atmosphere of repose which is one of the sources of the exquisite charm of Paris. The entire city is a perfected composition, all of whose lines and masses and tones contribute toward a general ensemble of elegance and beauty. And all its homes are finished and perfected interiors in which there is a common standard of taste and life.

A home to the French always means a "harmony," as they put it, established with certain pieces of furniture, certain *meubles* around which the rest is built. One of my French friends, who has one foot in the American colony, confessed to me that he had never found among us an interior that had to him the air of being furnished. "They all seem to me like encampments," he said. "So many little things set about!" These ordered homes that look as though they might have stood from all time, give you a sensation of exquisite repose; mingled with a constant fear of disturbing something.

I once, with a friend, spent a year in a French family of distinction where they had never seen any Americans. One of its inmates was a delightful old French lady who was gradually growing deaf, and she thought it was because we were Americans that she did not hear. She was a good soul for whom we

had much affection and who responded to it by trying to "make our education," as she called it, in a thousand ways. We had a loose, irregular manner of cutting the cards when we played with her at piquet; we did not like cheese, and therefore never ate any, sometimes which she construed into a lack in our early training; we did not air our linen properly; and, most serious thing of all, in our accounts we had a promiscuous way of lumping together whole classes of things under the general term "sundries." "There always will be gaps in the American education," she would say. "It cannot be otherwise." We had the estate of jeunes filles, although we had both seen something of the society of three countries, and as of evenings we sat and sewed while someone read aloud, the shut-in, tranquil, secluded atmosphere, about which there always seemed to be a faint, intangible perfume of violets, made me feel as though I were a little child again, sewing patchwork at my mother's knee. On the occasions when we had a soirée, with "jeunes gens," I found myself unconsciously looking forward to meeting men with something of the feeling that Eve must have had when she considered the apple.

Let me say in passing, that the French still keep up a good deal everywhere the custom of reading aloud. I once remarked to a

young Frenchman whom I knew upon the extreme beauty of his diction in speaking. He said it was the result of the habit they had at home of reading aloud. In the summer his mother had a former sociétaire of the Français come down once a week to their chateau to give the entire family lessons in diction.

French homes are apt not to have the material comforts of ours. In very good houses the fire will be lighted in the salon only when the company has actually rung at the door, or on the days of reception. I remember once buying a palm at the Louvre and having the salesman say to me, when I asked him if he would guarantee it to be in good condition: "Certainly it is in good condition, but this is something that must be taken into account. Once a week, Madam, you will make a fire in your salon. The plant, which is accustomed to the cold every other day, will naturally feel this sudden change to a warm atmosphere, and wilt momentarily." A man in the Louvre could not imagine an interior where there was a fire in the salon oftener than once a week.

Demoulins has given as one of his evidences of Anglo-Saxon superiority the many comforts we have in our homes, and these are incontestable. And yet as everything has the defects of its qualities, I cannot help feeling sometimes that our superior material

standpoint is rather hard to live up to, especially for women. As a nation, we must be constantly increasing our numerators, in whatever represents the unit of our ambitions; money, position, cultivation—and generally money—and it is upon the women that the necessity falls of giving constant and material proof of an advanced and enlightened state which is always changing its standards. Whole papers have to be invented to keep us informed from week to week and month to month of such things as the latest finds in etiquette and house decoration, the size of visiting cards, or the most approved kinds of kitchen dishes; and our sense of responsibility over our individual opinions on art, literature, religion and other subjects is something prodigious.

Everything with us tends towards individual initiative, and everything with the French towards general repose; but since, whatever we may be, we are not lacking in a sense of humor, I know of nothing that could gratify it more than to be present at one of those rare interviews where too much of the individual initiative of one side of the water has crossed over to the old world and comes in contact with too much of the repose of the other.

Once or twice in my life this privilege has

A Family Breakfast.

On the Street.

been granted me. I recall the expression on the face of a French wife of the type of one of those in the families I have described, at the answer of a pretty young American woman, who had come abroad alone for a year to study French and art, when asked how her husband was going to get along without her. "Oh, well—we didn't see so very much of each other when I was home. My husband was away all day—and we lived in a hotel—and at night when we didn't go out we generally had people in."

By far the most satisfying thing in this line, however, was a conversation between one of those French mothers who "know every hour of their daughters' lives," and whose family represented the concentrated essence of the French culture of seven hundred years, and two American girls of nineteen and twenty-one, respectively, who had come abroad alone to "make original investigations," as they told us. It was only one of them, however, a pretty creature like Daisy Miller, who exposed her past and present aspirations in the following monologue, broken scarcely by a single question from her amazed listener: "I want to know things for myself," she said. "I've come over to get everything from the original sources. I've got to learn French and German and Italian—oh, I've got

a mountain of work before me! I'm going to master French. I've given myself two months for it. Of course, that isn't very long, but as Miss Jones and I have the habit of studying, I think we can do a great deal. And I'm going to master art. At present I'm in a period where I think all art is the language of the soul. It's the expression of the soul—but that's another thing I want to do. I want to talk with them—the artists, I mean—and see if that's really true. The books say it is, but then they put everything so beautifully, don't you know. It doesn't take a girl very long to audit up a man—do you think it does—and as soon as I talk with them I shall know."

"What did you think of the salons?" the French lady asked, politely, as there came a momentary lull.

"Oh, we didn't go to them. There were nothing but modern pictures in them, and we hadn't come to that period yet. In French art I've only got as far as David, and the distinctly Napoleonic period. I began with Egyptian art. I gave a series of parlor talks on it at home. I've talked to more than five hundred people. I talked without remuneration. Poppa says they ought to have been paid for listening to me. He says I'll never learn anything because I never listen, and I don't know but it's true. I've never listened

in my life. I've always been used to talking. I have so many aspirations, and I don't know how they'll focus!"

My French friend has several times asked me how they did focus.

# *The Latin Quarter.*

My own Latin Quarter comprises the whole left bank of the Seine, indiscriminately, and is a confused mingling of souvenirs of Balzac, Mürger, François Villon, Victor Hugo and Du Maurier, together with a thousand others that I have collected on my own account. I remember my first déjeuner in a studio in the quartier, in the spring, in a tall house near the Panthéon, which looked out on an old garden full of the scent of lilacs, through which veered yellow butterflies and dragonflies. Backed up against it were other old houses with cream and faded pink and citron-green walls, and on their roofs sat a whole company of chimney pots, like so many gossippy old ladies. At breakfast was a young musical composer, who played for us afterwards, amidst great enthusiasm, a Wagnerian composition of his own in which the leitmotivs were what he called the students' cries. To this day I can hear him saying solemnly: "Here are the students coming in the distance!" I could not find out at the time, nor have I ever been able to discover since, that the students ever had any such

cries; but as the man of genius justly remarked: "If they had had any, they would have certainly been like those in his piece."

After this come all the Latin Quarter memories of that first winter when I began really to live in Paris, and to enjoy things with that sense of possession which gives them such a particular interest, before their freshness has become dulled by too much familiarity. I remember my first visits to the Luxembourg in the short afternoons, and coming out at the hour of closing into the gardens to find the statues shivering in the winter twilight, and the lights glimmering just enough through the mist to let you distinguish the violets and mimosa in the little charettes that the women pushed along the pavements; and then a succession of impressions from strolls along the quays, a "merchant of fried potatoes" standing in a little niche full of deep shadows, with her face illuminated by the red light of her charcoal brazier, which fell also on the heap of yellow crescents that she shook in her strainer over a kettle boiling like a witches' cauldron. Among these souvenirs, too, is one of Nôtre Dame—my quartier thought nothing of taking in the Isle of the City—a heavy mass against a pale evening sky, with a very young moon hovering exactly over one of its towers like a dot upon an i. She looked down gaily

upon the world, I remember, and seemed altogether different from the tranquil orb which rather gave way to the artificial lights, on my side of the Seine. How could any heavenly or other body, for that matter, be anything but gay who offered herself nightly the spectacle of Bohemia? For above everything else the secret of the eternal charm of the Quarter is the mysterious and intangible atmosphere of youth, and impulse, and freedom, and art that belongs to the "vie de Bohème," which touches with its spell everyone who has enough temperament to respond to it.

To solve the problem of whether the Latin Quarter, or rather French Bohemia, still exists, you have only to ask yourself what constitutes a country. Is it soil, or is it the assembling of a certain number of individuals, subjected to the same traditions and the same laws? My own leaning is to the latter theory. New England will still be New England, for instance, for many years to come, any superficial falling off in the way of pies at Thanksgiving or in brown bread and beans to the contrary notwithstanding, and so Bohemia on the left bank of the Seine, in all its essential qualities will long go on, not alone as it has for the last fifty years, but as it has for centuries past. Only it has moved. The first blow was given to its old haunts when

new streets, such as the Rue Soufflot, the Rue des Écoles, and the Boulevard St. Germain, played havoc with the labyrinth of little tortuous thoroughfares through which François Villon and the "bad boys" used to wander and play so many good practical jokes. This year the "Boul Mich," the famous Boulevard St. Michel, which has always been the great artery of the Quarter, has put in electric light! Who can imagine Bohemia and electric light? Its inhabitants have fled this modern splendor. Some of them have gone to the neighborhood of the Jardin des Plantes, but by far the greatest number have transported their uncertain Penates to the upper end of the Boulevard Montparnasse, to Montrouge, and into the Vaugiraud quartier.

This is the reason why you see them less and less in the part of Paris where you might naturally look for them; the famous bit in which, side by side, rise the College of France, the School of Medicine, the Sorbonne, the School of Pharmacy, the School of Decorative Arts, the Law School, and a little nearer the Seine, the School of the Beaux Arts. Some of them have been known to appear in this region, and even to attend an occasional lecture, but I shall astonish no one who knows anything about Bohemia in saying that these compose the minority. You have no right to the title of Bohemian on

the left bank of the Seine unless you have for motto a certain saying of the landscape painter Nazon: "Il y a des années ou l'on n'est pas en train," "There are years when you are not in the mood for doing anything!" Or another by an author whose name has unfortunately fallen into oblivion, "Il ne faut pas travailler entre les repas." "You must not work between meals!"

The Bohemian is essentially an idler, but at least he is an idler of a particular species. He has a horror of the fixed task, of anything that he ought to do; while often nobody could work harder when it is a question of something with which he has no concern at all. I know of two medical students, for instance, who are excellent sculptors, of an artist who much more frequently haunts the hospitals than the studios, and of a man going in for the degree of Master of Arts who spends his entire time in composing music, as his means do not allow him the luxury of a piano, with the aid of a ruler which he makes resound on his table to get the key.

To do Bohemia justice I must say that there are certain of its inhabitants who are real dilettantes in idleness, and never cultivate anything but the arts of conversation and repose. I knew one of these, a brilliant talker, and a great connoisseur in all artistic things, who never appears anywhere before

The Moulin Rouge.

dinner-time, for the simple reason that his habitual hour of rising is four in the afternoon. He is the son of a well-known Naval Officer at Toulon, and is in Paris to study medicine, but he has never done anything more than enter his name at the College, and to this day has not passed even his first examination. For that matter, he never will pass it, and his only intellectual labors are the composition of the letters by which he keeps his family informed as to his progress in his studies. I am told they are marvels of ingenuity, and can well believe it.

One of my latest souvenirs of the Latin Quarter is of a certain warm evening in July when I had the unexpected good fortune to catch a glimpse of Bohemia at home. I was dining with friends in the Rue Nôtre Dame des Champs in an apartment on the second floor, whose salon looked out over a whole little city of studios, hidden among green leaves. After dinner we talked late, and as I sat by the open window a vague murmur that floated in every now and then through the stillness of the summer night at last so roused my curiosity that I leaned over and looked out. Just below me, stretched out on a little square of grass about the size of a pocket handkerchief, under the light of three Venetian lanterns suspended from an anemic-looking apricot tree, were six youths ab-

sorbed in something that one of their number was reading aloud. It appeared to be a sort of weird Scandinavian poem, in which occurred every three minutes or so this refrain: "Then Halmar, son of Halmar, the warrior with the long hair and piercing eye, seized with his robust hand the pointed javelins." There was no apparent coherence to this epic, which nevertheless seemed to throw the audience into an ecstasy of joy. I was speculating as to the cause of this, wondering whether they really liked this tale of "Halmar, son of Halmar," or whether by one of those delicate sentiments peculiar to the Latin Quarter they had plunged themselves into this literature of the North on that hot evening to give themselves the delusion of being cool, when the reading was interrupted by a sudden invasion of the garden. It was the concierge in an extremely airy toilette, who invited the company with force to let honest people sleep. They immediately dispersed without protestations, with the exception of one individual who lived in the garden, and disappeared into a sort of vague perch in wood which was at the same time his apartment and studio. My friends told me that he was a Hungarian artist, who had the misfortune to believe himself alternatively the greatest painter, the greatest sculptor, and the greatest poet in the world, with the happy result that he never

finished anything in either one of these arts, and rarely paid his rent.

This little group of Bohemians, with others, were in the habit of meeting, when any of them had enough money, in a café that is now one of the most celebrated of the student resorts; a café with a charming name, about which lingers some of the perfume of old romance: la Closerie des Lilas. It juts out like a prow at the meeting of the Boulevard Montparnasse and the rue Nôtre Dame des Champs, and not only is it provided with a shaded terrace, but this commands a superb view of the Place de l'Observatoire, on which is the entrance to the famous Bal Buller. To these advantages, which are of no small importance, it joins others that have given it a reputation among the entire Bohemia of Montparnasse. The garçons have a delicate way of never noticing when the water bottles that are ordered—since you must keep on ordering something if you spend the entire evening in a café—only serve to replace refreshments of a more serious nature, involving pourboires, and they are quite ready to give credit for a week, even to patrons who manifestly have not funds enough to let them indulge in the luxury of a starched collar. Some are students I know, who frequent the Closerie, have sometimes tried to give me an idea of the conversations they have heard there in

even one hour of a single evening. What literary paradoxes and inconceivable philosophical theories, what sweeping criticisms of the art of all nations and all periods, interspersed with chaff and jokes of pyrotechnical brilliancy, and with what, in quarter jargon, would be called the abracadabrante declamations of a young model who had just discovered Maeterlinck! Even if I could remember them they would be nothing without the vision of the terrace, as I saw it one night when a party of us visited it, with its groups of very much bearded youths, in broad-brimmed felt hats, smoking clay pipes around tables invariably covered with empty glasses.

The man who took us there, a young painter of the Champs de Mars, is himself a famous Bohemian. As he made quite a hit at last year's Salon, and as I am sure he will some day be seriously known to fame, I will speak of him only by his initials, B. D. He is certainly one of the most amusing, most light-hearted, and most improvident individuals that I have ever met. I once went to his studio. It was perhaps as large as the palm of your hand, and besides the miscellaneous objects which filled every corner, it was at that time further encumbered by an enormous moyen-âge citadel in card-board, which B. D. had made himself. He had wanted to paint a picture representing a "feudal seigneur stand-

ing upon the tower of his donjon, contemplating, in the midst of a flight of crows, villages burning at the horizon." As he had neither the inclination nor the money to take a journey to see a real chateau of the middle ages, he had made one. When he has money it slips like water through his fingers. All his friends banquet at his expense, while he does lithography in colors, and succeeds perfectly, but each print that he makes costs him a thousand francs. When his purse is empty his equanimity remains undisturbed. He lunches and dines with the internes in their rooms in one of the numerous hospitals which he has decorated with his humorous sketches, and where, by a flattering innovation, he is inscribed as "interne perpetuel." If a day comes when he absolutely must have money, he engages in the most astonishing enterprises. Lately he has been doing panels by the piece, to decorate a restaurant car.

How many droll stories of the Latin Quarter and of the youth of famous artists and others less famous he has told us. Who would say that the Quarter was dead if they could hear him tell with all his dramatic raciness of "enfant de Paris," the story of the "mauvais épicier"—the wicked grocer—to whom a band of students from the Beaux Arts went one day to beg him to let them mould his leg, under the pretext that it was

the most beautiful one in France; and who, having had the simplicity to accede to this flattering request, was obliged to stay imprisoned in a mass of plaster and bricks for twenty-one hours, until a force of masons could be got to break him out with picks and restore him to his weeping family?

Another one of these stories that I remember was called "The true Tale of the Famous Tournament of Bouguereau, the Master, and his comrade, Blaise Desgoffes." It told of how in their student days, Bouguereau and Blaise Desgoffes decided to find out the secret of Rubens's painting and each challenged the other to discover it first. Both were to take the same subject and work at it till the "trick of the Rubens" was discovered. The theme agreed upon was a chaste but simple chestnut, of the variety known as horse. For two whole months neither Bouguereau nor Blaise Desgoffes left his canvas except to go to the Louvre to study the "Triomphs of Maire de Medicis" or the "Kermesse." At last, on the sixtieth day the two met in the street on the way to each other's studios, each brandishing in his hand a chef-d'œuvre representing a horse-chestnut. Both had won.

"And that is the reason," added B. D., with imperturbable gravity, "why Bouguereau and Desgoffes paint like Rubens!"

# *The Men of Letters.*

I wonder why no critic has ever thought of writing a comparative history of literature and art! It is surprising, when you compare the two, to see how their evolution has followed the same lines. Take the ballads of Villon, for instance; now light, now deep, now mocking, now tender. With their alternate lightness and majesty they are exact emblems of the Gothic cathedrals of the time, where grinning demons are side by side with pensive virgins. Then under the Renaissance the exquisite but mannered delicacy of a Ronsard has the same charm as the old French art of the day, through which has filtered the decadent grace of the Italian. In the time of Louis XIV., Racine shows all the classic force and harmonious coloring of a Poussin, while Corneille has the sumptuousness, the boldness, and the pomposity as well, of Lebrun, the decorator of Versailles. Boucher corresponds to the dainty frivolity and the corruption of the *petits maîtres*, makers of madrigals, while Watteau, under his apparent trifling, hides the same profound philosophy as Montesquieu in his *Lettres Per-*

*sanes,* Diderot in his *Le Neveu de Rameau* and Voltaire in his *Contes.* The Revolution and the Empire were nourished with false antiquity in the poems of the Abbé Delisle, and the dramas of Marie Joseph Chénier as much as with David's Romans. Chateaubriand and Madame de Stael broke away from classic traditions at the same time that Gerard and Gros emancipated themselves from historical painting, and Victor Hugo, not more than Delacroix, is the leader of the romantic movement. The whole attempt of the Barbizon school to reveal the painter's individual mind and soul through his pictures of the world surrounding him is identical with that in the books of George Sand, Stendahl and Flaubert.

From a distance of half a century we have been able to form an opinion of the works of this last great period. But if it be hard to judge correctly of the art of to-day, it is infinitely harder to give its relative value to contemporary literature, especially in a place like Paris. Ideas seethe there as though they formed part of the very atmosphere. Simple conversations often reveal so much imagination and such brilliant traits that you feel yourself in touch with talent of a high order. The press is literature, and every other man you meet is in some way a man of letters. Then this is a transition period. We find no towering masterpieces in France at

this end of the century, crystallizing the essence of the time, as it were, and no schools. This is probably because of the eclecticism of Paris at the present day. It is in times of fighting for ideas that leaders stand out; others group themselves around them, and schools are formed. The battle for ideas also makes for *chef d'oeuvres*. Rousseau, Puvis de Chavannes and Whistler would probably have been far less great if they had not been refused at the salons.

We find to-day that many great prophets, like Zola, have seen the decline of their popularity, and their pupils have either been forgotten or have evolved, like Huysmans or the Rosny brothers, who are links between two periods of literary art, probably as distinct as the epochs of Louis XV. and Louis XVI.

What is most interesting in the literary situation of to-day, I think, are general views of the literary field and the men of letters, an attempt to discover what has really made for itself a permanent place in literature and had an influence on its evolution, and what are the tendencies for the future. But here I can necessarily make only a hasty survey, and this must be taken only as an effort to discern tendencies.

As we look back we find that though the French literature of to-day got its impulse from Flaubert, George Sand and Stendhal, a

great evolution has taken place since then. It has drawn largely from foreign sources; the popularizing of Scandinavian, German, Russian, English and Italian works has largely influenced it. And, more than anything else, the luminous philosophy of Taine has had a great influence upon the literary movement by establishing the rights of the critic. Taine overthrew in France the theories of Hume, of Kant and of Hegel, tending to prove that each person is the judge of what he sees by demonstrating that science can exactly establish in what proportion different imaginations transform the same reality, and therefore receive impressions more or less elevated, and consequently more or less open to discussion.

I remember seeing this admirably illustrated one day at the Salon when two workmen were talking about a picture. It was a representation of a field of wheat, crude in color, with every blade carefully and minutely painted, reproduced as in a photograph. "Sapristi, but that man's got that wheat field well;" was what they were saying. With their elementary intellectual and artistic development, that was probably the only sort of picture which could give them the sensation of a real field, and the sudden emotion which a more highly organized and cultivated temperament would have before a landscape

ZOLA IN HIS STUDY.

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in which there was some wide, elevated impression of nature, interpreted through the temperament of an artist, they could not miss, for they had never known it. No matter what form the evolution of literature may have taken during the last years, its principle has always remained the same; that is, the scrupulous study of the different sensations which life constantly unrolling itself everywhere makes upon the mind and soul of each individual. This seems to be a sort of touchstone for judging French literature.

One of the most important forms of the literary evolution, of course, has been the naturalist movement, with M. Zola at its head. It is nothing new to say that M. Zola never was really a naturalist. His imagination also transformed reality, and he saw of humanity only its envelope. He built up a colossal system, but only to interpret the animal side of human nature from a pessimistic standpoint, and this will not have an influence that can be lasting, it seems to me, because it is too one-sided. I have never so well understood Zola's incompleteness as a literary artist as one day when someone pointed out to me his house in the country from which came the famous "Soirées de Medan." It stood on a hill overlooking the magnificent landscape of the Valley of the Seine, which must have inspired some of his finest descriptions, like

those in "Une Page d'Amour." But everything which revealed the personality of the man was uninspired and common. The house, an unattractive and pretentious white structure, was surrounded by such a garden as would be the ideal of a retired grocer, filled with an infinity of little multi-colored flower beds suggesting dishes of hors d'œuvres—fillets of anchovies bordered with chopped yolk of egg and parsley.

It is interesting to follow out the literary careers of the men whom Zola grouped round him in those famous evenings at Medan, from which came that book of short stories in which M. Guy de Maupassant established his fame with "Boule de Suif. It was only yesterday, it seems to me, in the little parish church of my own quarter in Paris, I heard the De Profundis sung over the body of this great master of the short story, who had just died dramatically in a private hospital, chasing imaginary butterflies, in which he fancied he saw his fleeting ideas. If M. Guy de Maupassant, in a general classification, is to be placed among the naturalists, in reality he is not one. He got his splendid literary training, nevertheless, from Flaubert. "If you see a grocer standing in a doorway," said Flaubert, "seize what is characteristic of that grocer and write a description of him which will always bring up that particular man, and

no one else." Maupassant was under the influence of the older writer for years, and no other person was ever admitted to so complete an intimacy with Flaubert. Teachers generally give to their disciples only what is superficial in their work. Their personal manner of thinking and seeing, which is what really differentiates them from others, they rarely give away. Their pupils, therefore, are generally only their imitators; but Flaubert gave to Guy de Maupassant all his best qualities of thought and form, at the same time that de Maupassant remained always himself, intellectually a sensitive and lofty spirit, apart. Before the simplest person he had an artistic emotion. He always saw the *âme*, the mind and soul, reflected through its environment. Then with his sure artistic instinct he eliminated every detail unnecessary for revealing this, while the exquisite perfection of his style gave him a perfect medium for expressing it. He stands so high in his *genre* that no one has ever attempted to imitate him. I think of only one writer of short stories whose art in any way resembles his, and that is Mary Wilkins. She also has the same sort of artistic emotion before even the simplest soul, and the same discriminating process of eliminating everything that is foreign to the impression she wishes to give.

M. Henry Céard, the man who wrote the

most remarkable of the Medan stories after M. de Maupassant, we find has entirely dropped out. He has never been able to console himself for the fall of naturalism, and lives outside of the world in a little Brittany fishing village, working continually on dramas and comedies which the theatres and publishers will have none of. Oddly enough, though, one day last summer, living drama, more poignant and terrible than anything men can invent, came to seek him out in his corner. One morning very early, when the dusk had scarcely begun to whiten, a sound of voices and of clashing of guns made him leap from his bed. Dreyfus had arrived in France, and was landing just under his window.

M. Huysmans, another of the Medan men, has gone from naturalism into catholicism, but as I consider him one of the men most characteristic of the latest development of the literary movement, I shall speak of him later.

M. Paul Hervieu is the newest of the Academicians. Just elected to the chair of Pailleron, he intended to be a diplomat, but on being appointed attaché to the French legation in Mexico, could not bring himself to leave Paris, and gave up diplomacy for literature, in which his success was immediate. He is young, fine-looking, with a sympathetic personality. He is one of a pleiad of young

novelists who cultivate literature *â thèse*; he writes books with a purpose, which may be either a principle or a paradox. It is the school of Alexandre Dumas fils, but profoundly modified by the change in tastes, and fashions, and by foreign influence, more particularly that of Ibsen and Tolstoi, and it is marked by the extreme large-mindedness which characterizes every sort of art to-day—the *pensée écrite* as well as *pensée peinte*. The underlying principle is always to view life sincerely through one's own temperament, "de se rouler en son moi," as said the old philosopher, Montaigne. Besides M. Paul Hervieu, with *l'Armature* and *Peints par eux Mêmes* and the play *Les Tenailles*, others of this group are M. Porto-Riche (author of *l'Amoureuse*), Brieux, M. Maurice Barrés (author of *Déracinés*), who was a Boulangist Deputy and is now one of the strongest partisans of Déroulede; M. Paul Adam (author of *La Force*), an employé in the Ministere des Postes et Telégraphe, who will write between two letters on administrative detail, such a remarkably constructed novel as *l'Empreinte*, against the Jesuit schools; M. de Curel (author of *la Nouvele Idole*), the rich and noble owner of a steel foundry, who writes in his leisure moments; and then there is the "Academy Goncourt," with the Marguerite Brothers, sons of General Marguerite, the

hero of the war of 1870, and the frères Rosny, who also especially illustrate the tendencies of to-day, and whom I will speak of later.

One thing that seems surprising to-day is to see how limited an influence, comparatively speaking, the Goncourts have apparently had upon literature. You will find English critics of ten years ago comparing the influence of what they call their luminous pages with those of Flaubert. One of these, now dead, speaks of "the movement of the last thirty years having its descriptive germs in Rousseau, Chateaubriand and Gautier; its psychological precursors in Diderot, Stendhal and Balzac, and culminating in the two consummate artists, Flaubert and de Goncourt." The de Goncourts were not luminous in the sense that they were not clear. No writer ever makes a great impress upon his time unless his style is simple and clear. The de Goncourts, no doubt, were an influence, but they were a transition, not a culmination. In "*Soeur Philomene*" you find the most remarkable example of exactly what they put into literature. With one page, the exquisite description of a hospital ward, you have a setting for the entire book.

When Paris began to tire of naturalism, a few years ago, it welcomed with extraordinary ardor the analytical novel brought to it by M. Paul Bourget, a favorite disciple of

Balzac. When he was young he was a disciple of Balzac in the most literal sense of the word, for he carried his veneration for the great master to such a point that, like him, he worked late into the night and set himself at his writing again at three in the morning, like Balzac, after drinking a great cup of black coffee, equally like Balzac. At that time he was a poor little professor in the École Alsacienne, and lived in one room in an attic in the Rue Guy-de-Labrosse, furnished simply with a little iron bed, an old armchair, books, and Balzac's bust. His old pupils will tell you that even then they remarked the extreme variety in his cravats which was the first indication of his leaning towards that *vie elegante* which it was to be his destiny to paint. Many of the traits of Casal, one of his early heroes, who ranged his forty pairs of boots in a room especially set apart for that purpose, and had all his linen laundered in London, he took from himself. In the early days he used to ramble through the Latin Quarter and along the quays with M. François Coppée and M. Barbey d'Aurevilly, and one of the greatest pleasures of the three was dining together on Sunday evening at Coppée's. Even if M. Coppée and his sister were away, the old servant put on the *pot au feu* just the same, and M. Barbey d'Aurevilly dined alone, except for the society of the

poet's cats. It is of those days that Richepin's verses speak:

*"J'ai fait un dejeuner tres faible chez Bourget,*
*Il n'avait pas de vin."* . . .

Now M. Paul Bourget is married—*rangé*—and his large apartment in the Rue Barbet de Jouy, near the Chamber of Deputies, is the comfortable interior of a man who has "arrived." His salon is crowded with works of art brought back from Italy; a head of Christ by a primitive painter looks down sadly on the modern English chairs of polished wood, covered with morocco. M. Bourget is still a hard worker, but his star has paled. His books are no longer Parisian events. Perhaps, however, this is because of the constantly increasing indifference of the public to society novels like his, representing only a cosmopolitan and artificial world, an unhealthy exception in the life of Paris. His first books were based simply on his *aventures de petit professeur*, in which he used to give an animate form to his studies of the consciousness.

M. Marcel Prévost, another writer who has disputed M. Paul Bourget's popularity with the public, especially the feminine public, and not without success, is in a period of decided decline. While M. Bourget always represented rich and elegant society women seeking, for perverse sensations, through *désoeu-*

"GYP."
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*vrement* and nervosity, M. Marcel Prévost went still farther, and took as models actresses, *demi-mondaines* or *rastoqouères*. Neither of these two writers ever made studies of the real *Parisienne*, interested as much in her home as in society, and in things of the mind as in the elegance of her dress and surroundings. And for that matter, how could they have studied these? M. Bourget only began to go into society after his success as a novelist; M. Prévost, a graduate of the École Polytechnique, was an engineer in a tobacco manufactory in a provincial town in the *Nord*, and only came to Paris after his first society novel, "le Scorpion," had proved a success.

One thing we must remember in thinking of French writers is the way in which books are looked upon as a source of fixed income in France. A man expects a *rente* from his novels. He produces one a year as another man would do so much business a year. And almost always in the *genre* which he finds the public wants and will buy. This statement must not be taken too generally, but it is certainly a decided factor in the immense disparity that there is apparently between French letters and French life. M. Prévost, for instance, appealed to the curiosity of the *femme de monde* about the *femme* of the *demi-monde*. As this took, he kept on. He is successful,

too, because, he writes well. He is a perfect story-teller.

It is quite natural for me to follow these two "*feministes*"—M. Bourget and M. Hermant—with Gyp, Mme. de Martel-Janville, who is noble, has the blood of Mirabeau in her veins, and proves it as much by her *verve* in dialogue as by her *fougue* as a politician. For Mme. Gyp is not satisfied with writing delicious stories like "*le Marriage de Chiffon*," or "*scenettes*" satirizing the morals and manners of the time; she also lets her voice be heard in politics, and very loud. She was the friend of Félix Faure. She was also the friend of Boulanger, and one of the most active electioneers for the General's candidate. She went from cabaret to cabaret in the little summer resort of Lion-sur-Mer, where she had a country house, haranguing the fishermen, and the evening of election day, on the triumph of her candidate, she went herself, and took off the doorbell of the defeated Republican. This brought her into the Normandy police court, where she was fined five francs, and the result was a brilliant satire from her pen, "How Elections Are Carried On at Tiger-by-the-Sea," with illustrations by Bob, which made her famous. Gyp does everything with the same ardor. She rides horseback; she paints portraits as well as decorative things, always signed

"Bob;" she writes indefatigably. She generally works at night.

Only a few of the women who have ever lived have been creators, and Gyp is one of them. She is absolutely without pedantry, and, as someone has said of her wittily in Paris, "She is the first French woman of letters who has resigned herself not to be a man of letters." Her books, the type of disrespect for everything and everybody, certainly are not to be taken as serious pictures of French life, for she is a satirist—nevertheless, a satirist of great esprit and charm—and a polemicist of violence, and everything therefore is necessarily exaggerated. With the money she has made from her books she has bought and restored the old ruined castle of the Mirabeaux in Provence, for while Gyp lashes pitilessly the little weaknesses of others, she allows herself a trifle of vanity over her genealogy.

M. Henri Lavedan, M. Abel Hermant, M. Maurice Donnay are three men whom you instinctively associate with Gyp, since they all have the same *genre* of writing. M. Henri Lavedan, author of "Catherine," one of the latest men elected to the Académie Française, son of a greatly esteemed man of letters, created a little scandal in the grave palace of the immortals by letting the title of Academician appear on the poster of such a comedie as

"Vieux Marcheur," certainly the most daring play that has ever been put upon the stage. M. Henri Lavedan began life, after leaving the clerical school where he was educated, by doing nothing. He was for a long time one of the bored members of a band of "*desoeuvrés*" youths who called themselves "*Les Faucheurs*," because their distinguishing characteristic was to carry their walking sticks in a listless fashion with the handle down, as reapers hold their scythes. They used to meet in a room in the Café Américain, on the Boulevard. Disgust for these inanities finally made a satirist out of M. Lavedan; but, as he says himself, it took his talent a long time to wake up. With a hatred of the "*monde chic*," there awoke in him pity and tenderness for the simple and humble. "There are two Lavedans in me," he is fond of saying; "this one and that one;" and he points to his head and his heart.

M. Maurice Donnay, who made his début as a poet of the Chat Noir, is the most brilliant of the young French dramatists, author of "*Les Amants*" and "*l'Amoureuses*," brought out at the Gymnase, and "*Le Torrent*," given at the Français. In passing, I might speak of a whole school of humorists and poets born from that quaint Bohemian café on Montmartre, le Chat Noir—Alphonse Allais, Auriol, Tristan Bernard, Willy, Franc-Nohain,

EDMOND ROSTAND IN HIS LIBRARY.
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Pierre Weber. They nearly all owe their success, especially Allais, Auriol and Tristan Bernard, to their imitation of American humorists.

Among what would be called the great French poets of to-day, François Coppée is the last who can be said to belong to the Naturalist school. His enemies, and he has a good many since he went into politics in the anti-Dreyfus party, will tell you that he is in poetry what George Ohnet is in prose, and it is certain that his genius is most unequal and that some of his verses have laid themselves open to the most absurd parodies. You could not say that his poem, "The Accident," a story of the heroism of a railway employé, beginning:

"Montfort was a stoker on the Northern Line,"

was of a very high order of poetry. It has been arranged for the benefit of all the great railway companies:

"Montfort was a stoker on the Western Line,"

"Montfort was a stoker on the Eastern Line,"

"Montfort was a stoker on the Lyons Line,"

"Montfort was a stoker on the Paris-Orleans Line," etc.

Nevertheless, François Coppée is a real poet who frequently shows fine poetic feeling. He is the son of a little employé in the

LLOYD WENGROW

ministry, and grandson of a brave *bourgeoise* of Paris, who once danced a *gavotte* with Robespierre. Coppée never finished college, and never studied much while he was there. Once when he was appointed by the minister to distribute the prizes in one of the great lycées, he could think of no better subject for his discourse than the uselessness of study, of which he, François Coppée, was the best possible example, since he had never been anything but a dunce at school, and that had not prevented him from becoming an Academician. This was a source of great scandal in the university world, and great amusement to Paris.

When I used to see M. François Coppée four or five years ago at the house of a common friend, he seemed as young as a boy, and, indeed, until his conversion lately to Catholicism, after a very serious illness, he was very young in character, and loved nothing better than to be with the students. He went to the *Bal Bullier* and similar resorts, where, before him, they had not been accustomed to see Academicians. He has bought a little place just outside Paris called "la Fraiziere," and there he spends nearly all his time now in the society of his sister Annette, his dog Truffe, his goat Bella and his cat Petit-Loulou.

Thirty or forty years ago he, with M.

Hérédia and M. Anatole France, made up a little club called le Parnasse. M. Catulle Mendés, one of the best known of the dramatic critics, belonged to it later, I think —a curious type, who has published an infinity of novels and verses, for the most part written on the tables of cafés, or in cabs. He is an eternal *nostambule*, whose adventures and whose duels can no longer be counted. M. José Maria de Hérédia is a last representative of the school of Banville or Leconte de Lisle, those poets who professed the cult of rhyme, and thought it of more importance in poetry than the thought. All M. de Hérédia's literary baggage is contained in 120 sonnets of fourteen verses, chiseled like antique medals, with the ideas and sonorous words full of coloring so condensed that they succeed in evoking immense *epopées*. Someone in Paris said that he put ten centuries into fourteen lines, and someone else that his poetry was a "Liebig's Extract." No one writes more perfect French than this naturalized Cuban. He is the father-in-law of André de Regnier.

As to M. Anatole France, I do not know that anyone has ever better expressed what he means to the age than Mr. Henry James by saying that he is the great luxury of our time. He is the most perfect writer and the clearest thinker since Voltaire. But when you know

the man from the inside, as it were, from those who know him intimately, you find that it is, above everything else, as a critic that he must be considered; a critic resigned to the things of to-day, but so profoundly skeptical for the future as to have evoked the criticism upon himself of being a "universal demoralizer." His skepticism leads him to be profoundly indulgent to everything and everybody, even himself, and he has abandoned his family. *"L'Orme du Mail," "le Mannequin d'Osier," "l'Anneau d'Amethyste,"* the most cruel criticisms possible upon the life of the third republic, unfortunately arrive at no conclusions and give no remedies. M. Anatole France was the son of a bookseller on the quais, and all those charming glimpses of childhood in *"le Journal de Mon Ami"* and *"Pierre Nozière"* are taken from his own souvenirs.

I must pass over the other critics, of whom so much has been written—M. Jules Lemaitre, M. Brunetière, M. Émile Faguet—just elected to the Académie Français—mentioning only M. André Chevrillon, nephew of Taine, the English professor in a provincial Lycée, if only to show that the fine art of criticism in France in no way declines, since a man can make a sensation in Paris with two critical essays such as M. Chevrillon's on Rudyard Kipling—to go back to French poetry, in which

there has been such a decided evolution with the school of the symbolists, of whom the first were Mallarmé and Verlaine. Our Edgar A. Poe was really the first symbolist, however. Even though it took the French to discover him.

The only way to understand what French symbolic poetry means is, I think, to read it—bits of it; some of it could only be comprehensible to "the bon Dieu and Ibsen," I fear. Read Verlaine's "Il pleure dans mon cœur comme il pleut dans la ville." Then you will wonder how you ever got on without these bits. Think, for instance, of the very elementary emotion in our old lines, "The melancholy days have come," etc., and compare them with the actual shiver you feel as you read Mallarmé's "*Plainte d'Automne,*" with its sad minor note struck at the very beginning: "*Since Maria left me to go to some other star—which, Orion, Altaïr, or thou, green Venus? —I have always loved solitude,*" and then, deepening the impression, symbol after symbol, in the most delicate *nuances*—loneliness, "*How many long days I have spent alone with my cat. By alone I mean without a material being, for my cat is a mystic companion, a spirit;*" the "moment," "*Since that white creature is no more, my favorite season in the year is the last languishing days of summer which precede the autumn, and in the day the hour when the sun*

*rests an instant just before fading away, throwing its rays of yellow copper upon the gray walls and its rays of red copper upon the window panes;*" and then there is the sudden contrast given by the playing of the hand-organ, "*which sings languishingly under my window in the great alley of poplars whose leaves seem dead to me even in the spring-time, since Maria passed through it with the waxen tapers for the last time. Why is it that as it played a joyously vulgar air which would put gayety into the heart of the faubourgs, its refrain went straight to my soul and made me weep?*"

This is exactly the same method of giving impressions as that of the painters who triumph to-day—Whistler, Puvis de Chavannes, Ménard, Dauchez. An entire school has followed Verlaine and Mallarmé, from M. Henri de Regnier, extremely classic in inspiration, extremely colorist in method, down through Moréas, Kahn, Laforgue, Stuart Merrill, Francis Viele-Griffin, to the very latest men—André Rivore, Fernand Gregh, André Dumas.

Pierre Loti (Pierre Viaud) really belongs among the poets. He is the greatest artist of all the men of letters. Words come to him no matter how; he expresses all his emotions, his sensations, instinctively, without the least effort. He belongs to one of the Huguenot families in La Rochelle, but spends most of his time in a quaint place in the Basses

PIERRE LOTI.
From "Nos Contemporains Chez Eux," Copyright by Dornac & Cie.

Pyrennes, where he has a beautiful Moorish house.

M. Edmond Rostand is rather a pupil of Leconte de Lisle than a symbolist. I fancy his immense success in Paris has come not only from the fact that he was born a poet and a dramatist, but that he fell in with a dawning wave of tendencies in the public. There is an underlying current against naturalism, end-of-the-century-ism; a leaning towards the old literature of noble emotions—movement, lofty ideals, pathos and fire, such as we find in Cyrano. Look at the popularity in America of a certain sort of historical novel just now. Coquelin, clever man that he is, foresaw this—he told me so—he made up his mind that the time had come for a theatre of the old drama of emotion and action, and the success of the Porte St. Martin proves his far-seeing intelligence. M. Rostand is a man of great esprit. "I don't see why the Americans want to claim Cyrano," he said at the time of the suit against him for having plagiarized an American. "They have already taken so much from Spain." M. Rostand married a charming poetess named Rosemond Girard, whom he heard recite some of her own verses at an evening party and fell in love with at first sight.

The pendulum of reaction has swung as far as possible in France in Joris Karl Huysmans.

In the beginning he was a naturalist, one of the Medan men who became famous through the most brutal and cynical novels possible, like *La-Bas* or *A Rebours*, with a hero like the decadent des Esseintes; a type that was said to be drawn from the decadent poet Comte Robert de Montesquieu. Then he suddenly surprised the world by writing *En Route*, in which he depicted the pure joys of the Trappist fathers, and *La Cathedrale*, which showed the great beauty of faith manifested in the Cathedral of Chartres. When he was retired from the Ministry of the Interior he built a little house under the shadow of the Abbaye of Ligurgé, where he lived for several years a semi-monastic existence. He has just entered into novitiate to become a Benedictine monk. Those who knew him intimately foresaw this. While he was yet in the Government religious objects rubbed elbows with profane in his tiny apartment in the Rue de Seine; a reliquary containing a bone of St. Lidwine was side by side with Forain's drawings, and he used to say: "The field of naturalism is too limited. It confines itself to the seven capital sins."

M. Huysmans will not be cloistered, but will belong to a sort of third order called the Oblature, and still live in the house and garden he built himself. Certainly, this will be one of the strangest sights to the people of the end of the

twentieth century to look back upon; this man of brilliant talent shut up in the ivory tower of his cloister, of which each capital is dedicated to a saint and decorated with mystic symbols, the capital of St. Francis of Assisi with a cord and a violet leaf, that of St. Lidwine with a rose leaf, St. Martin with a horseshoe and a viper, St. Benoit with a medal, a raven and an oak leaf. And in the garden the new Benedictine revives the herbs and flowers of the old books; the medicinal plants which, according to the poem, *Hortulus*, a good abbé of the ninth century cultivated in his cloister, twenty-three in all, liturgical and medicinal.

And besides this, the twentieth century will look back on those two brothers who sign themselves J.-H. Rosny, and write together like the Goncourts, of whom they were the warm friends and disciples. The preface of one of their last books, *l'Impericuse Bonté*, states clearly their aim: "Here is a book entirely consecrated to telling the effort of man to love his neighbor in great suffering and great misery. Do not seek in it either a philosophical or a social thesis; and, nevertheless, it is not one of those subjects which leave the soul imprisoned in a dream of glacial beauty, nor in the narrow ivory tower of art for art's sake. It is too steeped in poor humanity for that, too palpitating with the sobs of human beings. Il-

luminated by a single ray of genius, it might have troubled profoundly millions of souls, agitated an élite, and collaborated towards the formation of a new moral state of things." The Rosnys treat altruism as a force; a "force in which the highest intelligences and the firmest wills may find as fecund a development as in science or in art;" and their next book, they announce, they propose to devote to the broad, general and socialistic devotion of the individual to the masses.

The MM. Rosny are to me by far the most interesting of the French men of letters to-day. They are obscure; they will never found a school; but possibly it is they who voice the tendencies of the coming literature. The old "art for art's sake" has certainly gone by. The new literature will certainly be creative, but will it bring about a new order of society based on the socialistic devotion of the individual to the masses?

# *The Restaurants.*

The art of the cuisine is in decadence, the old chefs will tell you, in Paris, and yet the vogue of the Paris restaurants remains unchanged.

This is because they still hold society. None of the things which are really characteristic of Paris—not the Opera, nor the Salons, nor the Private Views, nor the Horse Show, nor the races, nor the restaurants, exist alone for what they are in themselves, but for what they mean as social institutions. Their importance comes largely from their social prestige, and when they lose that, they generally drop into oblivion. This is particularly true of a restaurant. There is always one where, at the hour of supper, after the closing of the theatres, you are sure to find the society men and women and the grand seigneurs of art and letters of tout-Paris, and the Prinzessen, Comtessen and Serene Altessen of other countries who are passing through, and those Grand Dukes who, it is said, were at the bottom of the Franco-Russian alliance—that they might have a play-ground in Paris and without pay—and the kings, if there be any

kings within the city walls, and the feminine celebrities of all sorts, without which such a place is nothing; the spot in which Fashion in general at that particular moment is holding her court—in default of other courts—and that will be the restaurant, and no other.

In all this there seems to be nothing of the old art of the cuisine and of its traditions in which we hear of a chef like Vatel, who committed suicide because the tide was late and the fish was wanting for his patron's table, or Careme, who retired from his royal master's service because he was misunderstood. "I composed for him," said Careme, bitterly, speaking of George the Fourth, "*a longe de veau en surprise*. He ate it, but he could not comprehend it." And then the great chef "rendered his apron," as the expression is in the language of his craft. It is equivalent, in this case at least, to saying that he "rendered his last breath." Remarkable dishes may be composed by great chefs for these fashionable supper restaurants; but if they are, they are not what we hear of when these are talked about.

One of the principal characteristics of the fashionable restaurant, in fact, is that no cuisine, however good, will ever be enough to make it keep its vogue for more than two seasons in succession. In no other court has fashion ever found herself so unrestrained, so

free to follow out the capriciousness and love of change which are her strongest traits. So she flits now to one place, now to another. Last year the world was at Paillard's. This season it suddenly left the boulevards and flew down the Avenue de l'Opéra to the new Café de Paris which had just risen, with newly decorated wings, from the ashes of its faded self. Where will it be another season? You might just as well ask me what will be the mode in bonnets in the year 2000. Anyone who goes to Paris and wants to sup at the café in vogue, unless he have some friend sufficiently in the movement to tell him just what one it is at the moment, has only one resource left to him. He must start out and hunt till he comes upon it.

How many a disappointment would be spared the unsophisticated traveler if he only knew this particular feature of Paris life! He goes abroad, perhaps, in the reign of Felix Faure, and on getting to the French capital, and being taken some evening after the theatre to the restaurant in fashion, finds it the most brilliant and amusing place he has ever seen in his life. It is full of exquisitely dressed women—those for whom the great artists of the mode create and have their being—and with distinguished-looking men wearing decorations, and with other men and women, less distinguished in appearance,

but who have about them that grand air which is a sort of mysterious family likeness between people who are personages. And then La Belle Otero comes in from the Folies Bergères with her train of followers; and then the rival beauty, Liane de Pougy, with her court, and la Cavalieri; and then it is a Prince of Siam, or the Grand Dukes, or the English Prime Minister, or the latest bride of the latest titled marriage—perhaps the only one among them all that the traveler recognizes, for her face has been thrust before him in every illustrated paper he has lately had from home. Of everything that he finds on his travels, this is what pleases him most, and when he goes back he tells every one he sees that when they are in Paris they must be sure to take supper at this particular café; which I have known of his pronouncing so as to rhyme with safe.

Then, perhaps two years later, in the reign of Émile Loubet, he comes again, and brings with him some of the very people to whom he has vaunted these splendors, and, when he goes to find them, they have as completely vanished as a vision summoned up by Aladdin's lamp. Possibly the restaurant is entirely empty; or, if it be a place like the Grand Café, it is filled with peaceful bourgeois, drinking grogs with a seriousness which suggests latent thoughts of rheumatism, or tourists in

traveling tweeds, or tranquil individuals playing dominoes. And then the traveler begins to talk about "changed Paris" and to sigh for the good old days of Felix Faure, just as Du Maurier sighed for the good old pre-Imperial days, and as we all of us sigh for the "there that is never here" when we come back and do not find things exactly as we left them; without taking the trouble to reflect that this old world of ours, so far as its human beings and their occupations and amusements are concerned, has gone on in pretty much the same way for six thousand years, and probably has not selected that particular moment of its history to change, even though it may have moved on.

Living in Paris gives you one secret of this moving on from one fashionable restaurant to another; and that is, that the women who invariably make the reputation of such places are always seeking for themselves some new *cadre*—some new framework for their beauty. Women of the world go to these restaurants, but no woman of society ever "makes" one. Their vogue is always given by that certain part of the feminine sex whom I once heard characterized by a little American woman in Paris as "so many charming-looking ladies to whom one could never speak." The ambition of these just now is to appear distinguished—to be noticeable for quiet ele-

gance in toilette and bearing, so that they carry about with them an air of the whole world instead of the half; but change they must have. If last season's café had Moorish decorations, that of this year must be something as far as possible removed from it; Louis XVI., perhaps, with a background of mirrors painted with vines and flowers and dainty cupids, such as wandered over the walls of the boudoir of Marie Antoinette.

Where then, this time, are the old traditions of the cuisine Française? I hear some one ask, and of that table which one of the most delicate and subtle writers of our day has said "was more entertaining than scenery," and that it "probably had more devotees than love." "Do you give in that you are any the less immortal for that?" he added. "To detect the flavor of an olive is no less a piece of human perfection than to find beauty in the colors of a sunset." It was of this very traditional cuisine that I was talking a few evenings ago to a French friend of much experience in dinners, and erudition on all subjects. "Be good enough to tell me just what you mean by traditions," he answered. "For instance, in the time of Louis XIII. all the dishes were perfumed with musk. But that, I fear, would not appeal to people nowadays. And then, a great many things that used to be eaten have

Restaurant Ledoyen.

Salon in the Café de Paris.

disappeared from the table entirely. During the Renaissance the principal delicacies were heron and peacock, the latter served surrounded by its beautiful tail. What sort of traditions do you mean?"

"The traditions of which you are always hearing," I said, "the old cuisine in distinction from what are called the 'creations' of the modern chefs of to-day, like 'pressed duck,' for instance—the *caneton de Rouen à la presse*. That, I suppose, is decidedly an invention of our time."

"Pressed duck is very old," he said; "that is, I think it is about a century old. I know they ate it in Rouen fifty years ago. They have all kinds of specialties in the old cuisine of *Provence*; they have dishes that are exquisite."

This is as near as I ever come to having defined for me exactly what is meant by the old French cuisine. I know that when I am invited to dinners given at certain restaurants I take a subtle pleasure in the repast which I am told comes from old traditions, and when I dine at others I take an equally subtle pleasure—one that is said to be the result of the cuisine of a chef who is a "creator." My own traditions of French cooking contain nothing but roasts, and are got principally from old books; such books, for instance, as Anatole France's "Rôtisserie de

la Reine Pédauque." In that the father is an "excellent roaster who fears God," and on feast days carries the roasters' banner, embroidered with a St. Laurence, with his gridiron, and a golden palm. This was over a hundred years ago, and it speaks of a time when the preparation of food, in general, was elevated into a profession which was dignified and picturesque. The foundations of nearly all the French cuisine of to-day were laid at that period, I fancy, and what the famous old restaurants do is to hand down its principles from generation to generation, adding to them and perfecting them as they go along, but never going outside of them.

This is the case with such old houses as the Café Anglais and the Maison Dorée on the Boulevards, or Voisin's in the Rue St. Honoré. In these three there is a continuity of traditions, if not from father to son, at least from chef to under-chef. If you want to know what this means, linger long enough over your coffee some day at the Maison Dorée to let the place empty, and then have a little talk with the old maître d'hôtel, Gustave, who has been thirty-three years with the house. He will approach the subject with something of the solemnity with which Francisque Sarcey talked of the Comédie Française. Gustave has one gesture when he wishes to be particularly impressive, a cir-

cular wave of the hand ending with the forefinger in the air. This is particularly in evidence when he speaks of some of the new restaurants in vogue. "It is art in decadence!" I heard him say lately. "What can you expect of a restaurant which has no cellar? A wine-cellar must be at least fifty years old. Wine is like a woman. It takes a start of at least twenty years to make a woman. And then all people think of nowadays is the name. A piece of duck with a sauce put to it and called something à la Bernhardt, or à la Loie Fuller, is nothing but the same piece of duck, n'est-ce-pas? (forefinger very much en l'air). It is no better for that. Eat a morsel of duck roasted here, 'à la broche,' as they did it fifty years ago, when M. Cassimir first came into the house, with a glass of our good old wine, or eat it at the Maison Voisin, and see if any name could make it any better."

I ventured to remark to Gustave that I had heard his good old wines, as well as his dinner, were unduly dear; and this seemed to hurt his feelings.

"That is because people do not know how to order," he answered indignantly. "It is sad to see men commanding dinners who have no instinct for composing a menu. They order à tort or à travers, with no harmony in their compositions, and spend five times as

much as they need. Let them come to me, and I will cause them to dine well without spending so much as a louis—yes, and they will drink good wine, too."

Nothing casts a deeper shade of melancholy over a factotum of an old restaurant like this than to see customers running against all their ideas of taste in their orders. "So Lord Lyons has arrived!" the old French chef of the Brevoort House would say delightedly in the old days when this famous gourmet was coming to New York. The cook always recognized his hand in the superior menus which came down.

The charm of a Paris restaurant comes not only from the table, but also from an æsthetic pleasure given in the way things are served, and the surroundings. I imagine food is just as exquisitely prepared in many other cities; but nowhere else is it made so generally entertaining. The man at the head of a leading Paris restaurant, who is always more or less of an artist, is past-master in getting effects from his resources; the brilliant white of his linen, the iridescence of his crystals, the pure intensity of his reds, the delicacy of his greens, the whole gamut of beautiful tones in between. His sensitive, cultivated eye is constantly seeking new combinations, and the successful restaurant always has his personality in it. This is so essential to its success

that no restaurant ever keeps its vogue if it loses this special sort of individuality. As an instance of this, take the old Café Anglais. It is just as well-ordered at present as in the days of its highest popularity: its delicious cuisine has in no way changed; but you never see a cat there, as the saying is, simply because the restaurant has passed into the hands of an English syndicate. It is a house without a host.

The Duval restaurants, scattered all over Paris, illustrate this same principle. They are cheap, it is true; but, as a matter of fact, there is no place in town where you can find certain dishes in greater perfection. An American painter whom I know, of broad experience in the delicate art of dining, tells me that he has been in the habit, for the last ten years, of going now and then to the head restaurant Duval, in the Rue Montesquieu, to eat a *filet de bœuf* with *sauce Bearnaise*. He always finds it the same, and perfect. It is evidently always cooked by the same chef, for the blush of red in the centre never changes its size. This dish costs at Duval's ninety-five centimes, and an excellent "grave supérieur" to go with it, with a real bouquet, can be got for one franc twenty-five. You wonder why all Paris does not go there, but there is no æsthetic pleasure to be got at the Bouillon Duval. For the Frenchman the solid break

in business hours in the middle of the day is something more than a mere opportunity for taking fuel. His déjeûner is an ordered and interesting function, from which he expects to get some sort of an inspiration for going through the rest of the day. I might say, however, in speaking of a Bouillon Duval, that it is one of the few places in Paris where women can go alone.

Any study of the psychology of the Paris restaurant would be quite incomplete unless some account were taken of a certain yielding in all of them to end-of-the-century tendencies. You find even the gravest of the old steady-goers making concessions to the demand of to-day for "features;" just as every now and then we open one of our old magazines to come with a little start upon some frankly journalistic article, with illustrations perceptibly leaning toward sensationalism.

Nearly all the restaurants now go in for specialties. They always did, for that matter; but these are much more in evidence to-day. At Voisin's you will hear of their "chaud froids," their special terrines of paté-de-foie-gras, their filet with "sauce Choron," named after an old chef who was with the house thirty years. Durand, the famous Durand of Boulanger repute, makes a specialty of eggs. He serves some eighty different dishes of them, and you can breakfast and dine there

A Tramping Party of Painters Off for a Day's Sketching.

every day of the week and have eight courses at each meal, with eggs at every course, yet never have the same dish twice. Noel and Péters, in the Passage des Princes, have gone in for Russian dishes, and recently imported five Russian chefs from St. Petersburg. Marguery still lives on his *sote à la Normande*, and holds all the provinces and some of Paris with it to such a degree that he keeps thirty-two chefs, and dries and polishes all his dishes by electricity. Paillard's and the Ambassadeurs in the Champs Elysées, with their flower-hung balconies, Madrid and Arménonville in the Bois de Boulogne will offer you all the features in cuisine that you will find anywhere else; but, above all, the loveliness of their surroundings makes them ever fashionable, and the principal specialty they have is that at any one of them you are sure to be amused. Foyot's, the old restaurant near the Luxembourg, keeps that delightful air of tradition, with a sort of concentrated essence of the schools, the galleries, and the Odéon lightly diffused through it which always has for me such a special fascination. A French friend of mine, wife of a professor, once a year dines *en ville* at Foyot's to celebrate her wedding anniversary. Long before the time, she and her husband begin to talk of the dinner, to compose the menu, to discuss the dishes of the anniversary before,

to make up their minds whether they will have the same table; and I never enter the door of Foyot's that I do not seem to see them sitting there enjoying their rare pleasure, after the fashion that Charles Lamb and his sister, Bridget Elia, enjoyed theirs in the early days when everything had to be counted, and when a purchase was not simply a purchase to them, but a triumph.

As for the "features" at Joseph's, in the Rue Marivaux, and Frédéric's, at the Tour d'Argent, they are all features. Probably no man in his line has ever been so much sung with his arms as Joseph, especially by Americans. People talked of his carving of a fowl with something of the religious respect with which they mentioned the bowing of a Sarasate. Many a time have I seen him perform the feat, holding the bird aloft, poised on the fork in his left hand, and then with only four or five passes of his long, flexible knife leaving it wingless and legless. Two or three more, and nothing remained but a skeleton. These strokes were part of the mysterious rites which preceded the eating of "*poularde à la Marivaux*," or "*Caneton de Rouen à la Presse.*" The refinement of the cuisine could go no farther, I fancy, than in the preparation of the poularde. When ready for cooking the chicken was wrapped in the belly of a lamb, and then swathed in bacon long enough to let

the two impart to it their essences. Then it was steamed in the vapor of a quart bottle of port wine and a pint of old rye whiskey. Joseph has now gone to England to live, and only his shade remains in Paris. He never quite got back the prestige he lost for giving up pure considerations of art to accept $10,000 a year from Mr. Vanderbilt. You will hear it said of him that he has lost the simplicity of the greatest art; that the dishes at the restaurant which still bears his name are too sensational. They have too many decorations for effect, such things as an American flag in the centre of the dish, or lobster claws sticking up where claws ought not to be.

Frédéric, at the Tour d'Argent, attracts people to his simple little restaurant on the banks of the Seine because the famous specialty, "*Caneton à la Presse*," is to be found there in its greatest perfection. The *caneton*, or young duckling of Rouen, is one of the greatest of French delicacies. It is what most nearly corresponds in France to our canvas-back duck. *À la presse* means that after the duck is carved the entire skeleton is put into a great silver press and crushed before the very eyes of the diner. The juices in the bones are supposed to give a particularly delicious flavor to the sauce which is afterward made from this stock. To Frédéric and Joseph must be given the glory of developing this dish to its present de-

gree of perfection, and giving it the exalted place it now holds in the cuisine of to-day. Its story is interesting as a document in culinary history. In the early sixties duck was pressed in Paris, but only between two plates, and then not for everybody. You had to be a Rothschild or a prince to have it done for you; and in no book on Paris of that date have I ever seen the dish mentioned. In '68 both Joseph and Frédéric, in two different houses, were making themselves remarked for "*caneton à la presse*." It was not until the early seventies that the press of to-day was invented. What a curious bit of sociological history is comprised in the reminiscences of these chefs! "It was in '74," Frédéric told me once, "that my rôle in the duck began. I then began to search in its juices and its carcass the refined duck that I serve now. When M. Paillard sold me the 'Tour d'Argent' I was searching still. Only lately have I been satisfied. Now I search no more."

The quaint Tour d'Argent is the only place I know of in Paris where you can find now a chef who is representative of the old type; that is to say, a man who is at once cook, maître d'hôtel and proprietor. Frédéric evolves his creations in the watches of the night, and executes them the next day without ever tasting them. His art seems to be purely intellectual. His famous

"sole à la cardinal," his *Poulet Madame Mackay*, his *Homard Alexander*, his *Oêufs Tuck*, his *Beignet Princesse Colona*, his *Poire Wanamaker*, all of those dishes which possibly make the cuisine sensational, but at least make it amusing, are, so far as he is concerned, pure works of the imagination.

Less and less, however, as I said in the beginning, is a Paris restaurant considered from anything but a social standpoint. The restaurants are the last of the "*salons où l'on cause*." The art of conversation is dropping out of the French salons. Music, monologues, revues, comedies, dances, the whole Bodinière, and perhaps it might have been said, in these late troublous times, anything that will amuse—that would keep the guests safely on neutral ground, is coming in, but nobody expects to talk.

An entire book could be written upon the famous restaurant dinners of the Nineteenth Century, as books have been written upon the salons of the Eighteenth. Some of these have come to be almost as much Parisian institutions as the Academy. Think of a continuity of dinner traditions that has lasted for over half a century! The most famous of these dinners had its beginning in the days when "Phillipe's" was the restaurant *à la mode*, in the time when George Sand was dining at a cabaret with Alfred de Musset. A few brilliant men

got into the habit of meeting together once a month for a dinner at Phillipe's, which he called the "*Dîner des Gens d'esprit.*" "To-day I have my *gens d'esprit,*" he would say.

The convives called it simply "The Friday Dinner"—"*le dîner du Vendredi.*" They met on the first Friday of each month, and their number was limited to twenty. They were of Brillat-Savarin's opinion about large dinners. People did not dine, he said, at them—they banqueted; and they did not talk—they toasted. In 1856, on the death of M. Bixio, a charming and brilliant man, who had been the principal founder of the Friday dinners, these were formally baptized *Dîner Bixio.* At that time among the members, to quote alphabetically, were such names as Arago, Augier, Delacroix, Dumas, père; Halévy, Messionier, Prosper Merimée, and the actor Regnier. Nearly every celebrated Frenchman has been of the number since.

In March, 1898, the list of members included the Prince d'Arenberg, Gaston Boissier, Victor Cherbuliez, Jules Claretie, Détaille, General de Gallifet, Gérôme, Ludovic Halévy, Massenet, Pailleron, Sardou, Melchior de Vogué, Raymond Poincaré. The dinner is always given at Voisin's, in that famous salon of the second Empire, the *Grand Seize.* What a record of the best French *esprit* those walls could give! They

have heard the famous conversations between Tourgénieff and Alexandre Dumas *fils*, and the famous narrations of that rare story-teller, the Duc d'Aumale, and the equally famous repartée of Labiche. One specimen of this last has come to me.

Labiche had once owned a farm, and was boasting of the stock he had raised on it—cows which gave eighteen quarts of milk a day.

"Eighteen quarts a day, my dear Labiche," spoke up a good Republican present, remembering suddenly that he was editor of an agricultural paper. "Eighteen quarts; that's a good deal!"

"But, you know, it was under the Empire!"

# *The Great Shops.*

"Come, Mademoiselle!" said the professor to the young girl who was taking the examination for a teacher's certificate, "where was Charles the Ninth when he fired upon the Huguenots on St. Bartholomew's day?"

The unfortunate candidate flushed, looked dazed, and then suddenly answered triumphantly: "In a window of the *Bon Marché*."

The idea of the *Louvre* had evidently gone through her mind, but as the word *Louvre* suggested above everything else the shop where she went so often, the equivalent *Bon Marché* suggested itself instinctively.

This might be said to represent the frame of mind of nearly every woman in Paris. The Louvre evokes far less for them the vision of the great palace of galleries than that of the large building opposite with staring posters across its front bearing such legends as: "*Nouveautes d'hiver*," "*Grande Exposition de Blanc*," "*Saison d'Eté*." The left bank of the Seine is symbolized for the inhabitants of her right not nearly so much by the Latin Quarter or even the aristocratic Faubourg St. Germain as by the gigantic *Bon Marché*, gorged

not only with all the necessities of life, but what Voltaire called more necessary still, the superfluities. The *Printemps* brings up not nearly so much the blossoming of the flowers as sky-blue posters announcing bargain days for gloves, laces or silks.

What an important part of the history of the Second Empire and the Third Republic would have been left out if Zola had not written "*Au Bonheur des Dames*," the history of one of these great shops! They are one of the most important inventions of this century, most characteristic of its sociological evolution. Those who only see in their astonishing prosperity the individual genius of business men like Boucicaut of the *Bon Marché*, Chauchard or Hériot of the *Louvre*, Jaluzot of the *Printemps*, who came to Paris in sabots, do not look below the surface of things for the spirit of the age.

Such bazars are the outcome of the social necessities of modern times, in which the motto is, not more equality for all than luxury for all. They were inevitable consequences of the Revolution and the suppression of the corporations. In the First Empire appeared shops which soon became famous, *La Fille Mal Gardee*, *Le Diable Boiteux*, *Le Masque de Fer* or *Les Deux Magôts*. After the revolution of 1830 they gave place to others still larger and more popular; *La Belle Fermiere*, *La Chaussée*

*d'Antin, Le Coin de La Rue, Le Pauvre Diable.* And at the same time two new types appeared; the clerk and the "demoiselle de magazin," who are chaffed in the popular songs and on the stage as "Calico" and "Mlle. Percaline."

At the end of the Second Empire liberal ideas made immense progress. All classes of society were stirred by them, from the highest to the lowest. In this last a little clerk left a little shop to go into partnership with the proprietor of another little shop in the Rue du Bac called the "*Bon Marché.*" His name was Aristide Boucicaut; and his was one of those creative minds which revolutionize the world. All his genius lay in a few principles—to suppress bargaining by a fixed price, to sell at retail for almost the same price as at wholesale and make up the difference by the quantity of the sales; finally, to interest the employés in the business by a commission. Seventeen years later his house had swallowed up all the immense space between the Rues de Sèvres, Valpeau, du Bac and de Babylone. Lately it has crossed this last street and begun to spread out on the other side, and the business it does every year amounts to over a hundred millions of francs.

The *Louvre* was founded by M. Chauchard, a clerk of the *Pauvre Diable,* who made a business partnership with M. Hériot, head clerk at

The Magazin du Printemps.

The Bon Marché and Square.

TWO GREAT FRENCH DEPARTMENT STORES.

the silk counter of the *Ville de Paris*, whom he got to know through the intermediary of his barber. They only applied the same ideas, which proves that they were in the air. Now M. Chauchard is one of the French millionaires, and best known as the owner of the picture gallery which is the most difficult of access in Paris. It contains Millet's Angelus. And all over town in each quarter other great shops have sprung up, miniatures of the famous ones; the *Samaritaine*, the *Place Clichy*, the *Phares de la Bastille*, the *Tapis Rouge*, the *Soldat Laboreur*, etc.

The *Louvre* and the *Bon Marché* alone have put feverish activity into great looms and great industries all over France. Not only have they put new life into the silks of Lyons, the laces of Puy and of Calais, the glove manufactories of Grenoble and of Chaumont (1,500,000 pairs of gloves are sold every year at the *Bon Marché* alone), the woods of Roubaix and of Rheims, the draperies of Sedan and Elbeuf, the linen of the Vosges, of Cambrai and of Armentieres, but they have founded whole new industries. The *Louvre* has carried to St. Etienne the manufacture of certain foreign velvets, has replaced the toys of Nuremberg by French toys, and has created in the Hautes Pyrenées, where there is the beautiful Pyrenees wool, the old industry of knitting of

which Berlin and Kremnitz only fifteen years ago had the monopoly.

These great shops have had still another important influence in France. They have had much more effect than you would imagine on the relations between labor and capital. The spectacle of these immense organizations in which all the gains are divided mathematically between all the employés in direct proportion to their activity has gained many minds to collectivism. The *Bon Marché*, for instance, in one sense of the word constitutes a perfect little socialistic republic. It is governed by a triumvirate of directors chosen from among its own members, who have mounted successively every round of the ladder for a term of three years, and are ineligible for reëlection. Every employé receives not only a salary, but a percentage of the yearly profits. The house has a restaurant on the top floor, where its employés are fed; it has comfortable dormitories where they live. This vision has gained many minds to socialism. They forget that this Republic is made up of chosen individuals, and that an undesirable employé is put out of it at the very beginning. This process of discrimination would be very difficult for a State.

As to the part these great shops have played in the evolution of manners in Paris, it would certainly make a curious study. One simple

little custom introduced by the *Bon Marché* has had a most important ethical influence on the modern French feminine mind. This is its practice of allowing customers to send goods home to be examined at leisure, and paid for only if they are kept. A great many women with no money at all in this way give themselves the illusion of having large fortunes. They enter this palace full of treasures, have the joy of handling and choosing them, and sending home the value of several hundred francs' worth—francs which they have not got. These they keep for three or four days and then return, or keep only a trifle. We have all seen entire families going to the circus to take one small child, and I have known of a woman's flanking one modest saucepan of which she was in need with seven hundred francs' worth of laces, underlinen and bibelots she had no intention of buying at all. She takes at the door that little book of numbers which facilitates shopping to such an extraordinary degree, and when she admires anything has only to hand this to the clerk and let him put on the number to feel that it is hers. What a strangely constructed intellect it must be that gets pleasure from this sort of thing. It must be of the same species as that of the woman who could not believe that her bank account was exhausted because her book was still half full of checks.

The *Bon Marché* is a close student of the feminine character, as women sometimes find out to their sorrow. One in modest circumstances who had given herself the illusion of luxury by having a very elegant fur cape sent home, when she went to return it was met with the statement: "Unfortunately, madam, we cannot take this back. An employé of the house sat directly behind you yesterday at a wedding and saw you wearing it." I have always wondered what the sequel was, and if it was one of those feminine tragedies we sometimes find in French literature. Do you remember the story—was it by Guy de Maupassant—where the woman borrowed a friend's diamond necklace to wear to a ball and lost it, and returned a fac-simile of it? She and her husband impoverished themselves, ran into debt, and spent all their lives making this up. Finally, when they were old and gray they met the friend and told her the story. She burst into tears. "Why, my dear, the diamonds were paste!" she said. I always imagine the woman of the fur cape not telling her husband, and then having to skimp and save out of her allowance for indefinite years, for the French women always have allowances. The family income is always tithed religiously among people in ordinary circumstances, and in the expense books you will find awful little tables giving calculations

for thrifty housewives—and they are nearly all thrifty in France; a family with an income of 10,000 francs should spend so much for rent, so much for food, so much for pleasures, and so on. How could the great shops combat all this system except with immense temptations? They do not seem to me such dangerously seductive places as the great American shops. They have not the same distinction. Go into a New York shop at the dawning of a season and you will feel that the things so daintily displayed everywhere are going to be worn by the most distinguished women throughout the length and breadth of the land. You do not get that sensation at the *Louvre* or the *Bon Marché*. As they are great levelers, the dressmakers are always trying to keep their models and materials out of them, and as Paris is the centre of supplies, even the humblest dressmaker sells her materials. You gain nothing in buying yourself, because she saves the middleman. The great shops in New York are importers of both dresses and stuffs, and have the best fashions. The great shops in France may dress the provinces. They do not dress Paris. You never get a style there until after it has been popularized, and therefore commonized.

But what a delight is the sensation they give you of the shop's being made for woman, and not woman for the shop. Their amiability,

their obligingness, is unbounded. Have you bought two or three yards of dotted muslin, for instance, to cover your dressing-table, and then decided you do not want it? Take the muslin back and the money will be refunded to you. The shop likes to have you think yourself economical, and it must have you satisfied. Moreover, it is always trustworthy and sincere. All the shops are large importers of Oriental stuffs and curios; the *Bon Marché* is one of the largest in the world. You can often "junk" there with satisfaction.

The great shops play their part in the pageants of the capital. At least once a year feminine Paris rises early in the morning and goes over to the *Bon Marché* lace sale in February. It is the first suggestion of spring; the great place blossoming with lilacs, crocuses, anemones and violets—artificial, to be sure, but the exquisite artificiality of the French—and masses of stuffs, ribbons and gloves strewn everywhere in the most intelligent disorder, and the most artistic spring harmonies. On the twentieth of March, the legendary day when the old chestnut tree of the Tuileries first puts forth its leaves, the *Printemps* gives away 25,000 bouquets of violets. Every day the *Louvre* gives the children balloons, 500 of them, which float through Paris. The *Samaritaine* down by the old quay has taken a curious way of combatting the prejudice among

the poorer classes against buying on Friday. Every Friday it gives away a teacup or a sugar bowl or a tray.

The ethical influence of the great shops lies especially in the envy of luxury and the need for it in all classes which they create, which always means a refinement of taste. This universal standard of taste which is so characteristic of Paris is principally the result of the daily sight of beautiful things. And one of the beautiful visions for many millions of souls in France is the admirable contrasts of color, the intelligent profusion of rich and rare things which fill the eyes at the *Louvre* and the *Bon Marché*.

# PART II.
# THE RULERS OF PARIS

# *The Chamber of Deputies.*

Everybody in France talks politics. This does not mean that the Government is popular, but that it is ubiquitous. Ten times a day, in every sort of place, from a salon to an omnibus, you are sure to hear the inevitable: "If I were the Government!" The strange thing is that while everybody talks politics you never meet anyone who seems to be really interested in it—unless it be some one like your concierge. The man in the street is the only one who still has some of that hope which triumphs over experience and which is so necessary for political ardor. Nobody else believes in politics. One of my friends tells me that he has voted, from a sense of duty, every four years all his life for a Deputy, but has never had the good fortune to see a single one of his candidates elected. This, he said, was because the choice of a Deputy was always determined by some little side issue which appealed to the people, outside of any real question at stake. "If the people in the quarter of the Rue de Bac want a gutter," he went on, "it is the man who promises them a gutter who is elected. You

may be sure your concierge has his own little plan for reform and improvement, and he will cast his ballot for the man through whom he thinks he will get it."

To test this statement, one day I questioned the cerberus who guards my dwelling about his political faith. He began by protesting that he knew nothing about politics; and in this statement he was confirmed by his wife, really much the better man of the two, who kept reiterating with emphasis, "François ne se connait pas du tout en politique." I finally extracted that François did vote, and always for the man who was "for the people." In the last election this had meant the candidate who promised a new covered market to the quarter. No one, I am sure, who has ever strolled of a Wednesday or a Saturday morning along the banks of the Seine in the sixteenth arrondissement can have any doubt that we need a new market, and covered; but as the need has been contemporary with the existence of this part of town itself, I can easily see why only a small number of its inhabitants would ever have faith that any election would bring it to us. The man of the people votes because in that way he feels that he is exercising his rights of citizenship. But among the other classes there is generally the greatest indifference over elections, and only a fifth of the voters ever go to the polls.

For this reason the various wards of Paris find themselves represented in the Chamber by men who are neither typical of their constituents nor in accord with each other on any common purpose. For instance, an aristocrat like the Comte de Sabran Pontavés stands for la Villette, whose population is almost entirely made up of butchers; and a Socialist like Viviani is the mouthpiece of the quarter of the Schools. The same principle holds true in the provinces. I know of a Deputy in Brittany, Cosmao-Dumanet, who has been returned to the Chamber for fifteen years simply because he once proposed a law —impossible to be put into execution, moreover—for adding each week to the rations of the soldiers a single sardine. Among the fishing populace of Finistère this has been enough to make his whole political fortune. It is the single act of his life, but it is sufficient. His position is unshakable.

The time was, in the early days of the Republic, when the Deputies busied themselves over real things. Then they were engaged in a series of hand-to-hand duels, as it were, with an ever-threatening monarchy. Even up to as late as 1889 there were two hundred Monarchist Deputies in the Chamber, and France was divided into two distinct parties; Legitimists, Orleanists and Imperialists on the one side; Conservative, Progressive and

Radical Republicans on the other—these last united on Republican principles, but very much at odds on the question of just what kind of a Republic they wanted, and how to make it. To-day, out of the 568 Deputies, there are only forty-four Monarchists. Even Comte Boni de Castellane, with his political inheritance, took his seat in the Chamber, not as a Monarchist, but as a Progressive Republican. Now that the lawmakers of the country are no longer united on vital questions, the greater part of them have come to be more or less professional politicians, principally occupied in keeping their seats.

Two important traits of the French character shine forth conspicuously in a Deputy. The first is a Frenchman's horror of any authority to which he must submit; and the second his love for any he exercises. No sooner has he taken his seat in the Chamber than he begins to take advantage of his new power in every possible way. At his pleasure he can propose any bill or project for a law which comes into his head, and can interpellate the ministry on anything he pleases, from its general policy down to the reason why the doors of the railway carriages will not stay shut, or why the evening before such and such a street was blocked by traffic. Therefore, one of the principal means by which Deputies make political capital is by some absurd interpella-

tion of the Government which will make them talked about; or by some amusing or abusive interruption of a speech which will attract attention in the official report of a session, and make the people at home think they are represented at the capital by a great man. It is hardly necessary to say that the number of laws and the number of interpellations proposed is always something enormous. From 1893 to 1898 two hundred interpellations were discussed.

As an instance of the practical working of these prerogatives, take the question of the sous-prefets, which absorbed so much attention in the last Chamber. The rôle of the prefet is almost entirely representative, and he does not need an assistant. As in all countries, the questions that most appeal to the people are naturally those of reform and economy; and when the hard-pressed legislator looks about him for reforms to propose, the only thing he can ever think of is to suppress the sous-prefets. His efforts at economy remind me of a remark an American woman I once knew made to me on the same subject. She wanted to economize, she said, and she was thinking of taking up smoking. "How could taking up smoking possibly help you?" I asked. "Well," she answered, "every man I ever saw who thought of economizing always said he was going to give up

smoking. And as that was the only thing I could think of that I could give up, I thought I would better begin it." In the same way, the French Deputy, if he wanted to make any real economies, would have to take up something, for there is not much with which the Constitution would allow him to do away. To give up the sous-prefets, he would first have to reform the Constitution. This does not in the least prevent the question of abolishing them from coming up in the Chamber with periodical regularity. Ten years ago the Freycinet ministry fell because the Right joined with the Radicals to refuse the appropriations for the sous-prefectures. This was then as it is to-day entirely a matter of legislative sparring, and I do not know any better way of showing how this game of fencing still goes on now, as it probably will go on ten years from now, than through this extract from the Figaro of a few days ago by Alfred Capus, one of the "funny men" on that paper who gets his reputation principally by chaffing the Government:

THE QUESTION OF THE SOUS-PREFETS.

The Senator: I am listening, my dear Deputy.

The Deputy: This is the point. This question of the sous-prefets is coming up again in the Chamber.

The Senator: As it does every year?

The Deputy: Yes, but this time it will have exceptional gravity. The only thing our constituents talk of is economy. They do nothing but demand economy, reductions in the budget.

The Senator: They are quite right.

The Deputy: They are a thousand times right; we are running up against a blank wall. Now, from this point of view it is evident that the suppression of the sous-prefets would be an excellent thing. These functionaries, we can say between ourselves, are completely useless to-day.

The Senator: Absolutely useless—unless perhaps at election time, when they render us a few services.

The Deputy: Yes, then it's certain that they do render us certain services, and sufficiently important ones. But it is impossible to say to our electors: "The sous-prefet is nothing but an electoral agent." It might sound a little cynical.

The Senator: Just a little cynical—yes.

The Deputy: The elector, in general, sees in this question only a possible reform. And we are obliged to satisfy him. Here is why I am going to stand for the suppression of the sous-prefets, and with firmness; but before voting there is one thing I should like to

know. If the bill passes the Chamber, the Senate is sure to reject it, is it not?

The Senator: Oh, perfectly sure.

The Deputy: You promise me this?

The Senator: I promise you.

The Deputy: Because, you understand, I am quite willing to vote at the Chamber to show my electors that I am a partisan of economy, but on condition that I am sure the measure will not pass the Senate.

The Senator: You may count on it. You have my word.

The Deputy: Imagine me without a sous-prefet at the next elections!

The Senator: The very idea makes me shudder.

The Deputy: Thanks once more. I shall vote with all the energy possible.

This is an epitome of French legislation. Coquelin Cadet, in one of his monologues, gives another. He presents himself as the model Deputy. "Do you ask me of what party I am?" he says. "Nothing could be easier to answer. I am of the party of my electors! And as for reform, I am for all the reforms; but for one in particular I have had an idea that savors of genius. As the Senators always undo everything the Deputies do, and the Deputies everything the Senate does, I propose putting all the Deputies into the Senate, and all the Senators into

the Chamber. That will solve the problem and then we can accomplish something."

It is as much as ever that any legislation at all comes out of these political gymnastics, which are principally used to overturn the Government. Lord Brougham once said: "Happily France has a revolution every fifteen years; without that she would be the first of nations." Now that she has been twice fifteen years without making a revolution, her rivals can say: "Happily France changes her ministry every eight months; without that no one knows what she might become." In the last twenty-seven years she has had twenty-six Ministers of Foreign Affairs and thirty-one of the Interior. "I am nothing but an old umbrella which has received many showers," was the witty remark of a Minister not long ago. It is easy to see that no consistent general policy can be kept up when every six months or so an entire change in the direction not only stops everything that has been begun, but substitutes a radically new set of ideas for those that are in process of execution. Somebody has called the Chamber a "Congress of Ambassadors." No sort of majority is ever to be depended upon. The Ministry, instead of giving its attention to great and important questions, is obliged to fight constantly for its existence by conciliating this or that or the other adversary

in order to keep the executive machine going on. A typical instance of this was seen lately when Waldeck-Rousseau allowed the Socialists to carry their red flag at the unveiling of the statue to Dalou, the "Triumph of the Republic." Any concession to socialism always alarms the Conservative element of the Chamber, and the Waldeck-Rousseau Ministry in consequence only escaped falling by the skin of its teeth, while if it had not given the permission, it would equally have risked being overturned by the extreme Left.

The root of the trouble is that France has quite wandered away from the Constitution, made in 1875, and admirably adapted to her present needs. This provides that power shall be of two sorts: legislative, vested in the Senate and the Chamber; and administrative, vested in the Ministry. As a matter of fact, the Ministry only executes such laws as the Chamber allows, and custom forces it to resign every time it is not supported by a majority of the Chamber. For a long time this was necessary in the fight against monarchy, when the Chamber had, as it were, to feel its way along and be sure that the country was with it; but it is fatal to-day, when this habit has been turned into nothing but a means of constantly hampering and teasing the Government. Safety for the country lies only in the

Ministry called for by the Constitution; homogeneous, that is to say, composed of members having common aims and a common programme of foreign and domestic policy, for which they are responsible not only to the Chamber, but to the Senate, and, above all, a Ministry responsible to the legislature only for its general policy. Now the Ministry stands or falls purely at the caprice of groups, on trivial issues. Why should the Freycinet Ministry have resigned ten years ago on the question of the sous-prefets, simply because it was the caprice of the Right to unite with the Radicals to refuse the appropriations for the sous-prefectures? This was pure teasing. It could have no practical result. Later the Tirard Ministry resigned because it pleased this same Right to demand an immediate revision of the Constitution; and when the Floquet Ministry came in and naturally put revision into its programme, the Right capriciously voted to adjourn revision indefinitely, and the Floquet Ministry went out in its turn.

In this way France is rapidly falling under what Jefferson feared for the United States. He called it "the tyranny of the legislators." Instead of having one sovereign, she has 568. What the French most admire in our Republic is, as expressed by M. Paul Deschanel, President of the Chamber, "the wisdom and

moderation with which this great American people has, to use the words of Webster, 'spontaneously limited its own sovereignty and put boundaries to it.'"

But when France begins to think of establishing a Government like ours, she finds herself face to face with great problems which we have not. In the midst of the heavily-armed peoples of Europe she must keep up an enormous standing army, in the very nature of its organization a constant menace to republican principles. To add to the prerogatives of the President and make him "chief of the army," as ours is, seconded by Ministers irresponsible before the two legislative bodies, would be a serious danger with a people so easily carried away as the French. Another vital objection would be found in the centralization of her Government, so difficult for us to understand. Imagine, for instance, that it was the Government at Washington who decided just how many churches there should be in every town in the United States, and how they should be managed; and who directed every educational institution in the country, so that a mother with a son away at school or college would have to write to the capital to make so small a complaint as that her boy's clothes were not mended properly. I have seen lately a letter of this sort in the Paris papers. With us a thousand

Hall of Chamber of Deputies.

intermediary forces break the central power, and therefore not only guarantee the respect of individual liberty but preserve the country from coups d'état. Every part of France is subject to exactly the same laws, and the Government interferes at every turn with private life. If at the head of this were a President with the perogatives of ours, the creature of a victorious power, aided by Ministers free to abuse their power during four years, existence would become impossible. Between two tyrannies France prefers that of the 568.

The French Chamber is a less interesting place to visit, to my mind, than either the House of Commons or the House in Washington, and the reason of this is because of the political methods of this body of sovereigns. The details of their proceedings are not interesting. Its members, though not brilliant orators, are generally clever speakers. Of such, for instance, is a man like Brisson, who developed political sparring into a fine art in defending the Empire, or Paschal Grousset, who became equally skillful in trying to demolish the Republic. Many of the younger Deputies are graduates of the École des Hautes-Études Politique, or have learned political fencing in what is called the Mole School; a curious institution invented by ambitious young lawyers,

where a hall is divided into Right and Left, and imaginary bills are proposed and attacked. Poincaré, Barthou, Deschanel, Jaurés, Millerand, men of great political reputation, in spite of the fact that none of them is yet over forty, are Parisians who have skilfully and prudently worked up their political careers. The great mass of the Deputies is made up of the most widely differing types, according to whether they are men who have gone into politics through ambition, through interest, by chance or as a sort of sport, according to the party to which they belong, and according to whether they are Parisians or provincials. These last, too, vary with the part of the country from which they come. Maurice Barrés, in a recent novel called "Les Déracinés," has painted in a remarkable manner the young provincial who tears himself away from his native soil and comes to Paris to seek his political fortune, and the world in which he finds himself, seething with ideas, and filled with a struggling mass of men who have long since fathomed all the possible means of "arriving."

French politics have now so fallen into the hands of professionals that to see an everyday individual trying his hand at them gives you somewhat the sensation that you have when you see an amateur trying to play some gentle, peaceful home tune in a modern

salon at a musical matinée, with its programme of artists. The common people take a real interest in politics. They subscribe to a sou paper and follow its political color. It is the "Petit Journal," "L'intransigeant," "La Libre Parole," which rule the workingman and make public opinion among the lower classes of Paris in which are nearly all the voters. This is the reason why the capital is so generally represented in the House by "Chauvinists," or Nationalists and Socialists, as they are now called. They are the military party.

Every one talks politics, however, as I said in the beginning. Abel Hermant in his new play, "*Le Faubourg*," represents it as as much a subject of conversation in the Faubourg St. Germain as it is everywhere else. "What we need is good Republicans—brought up by the Jesuits!" is one of the mots of the piece. It all ends in talk. The Monarchists live in a dream; the actual régime does not interest them, and they live upon visions of a new monarchy. And, outside of professional politicians, the Socialists live in just as much of a dream. In talking with a leading Socialist not long ago, he told me he had no political opinions. He is waiting, like all of his faith, for a new order of society; and meanwhile he lives outside of the one that exists.

Meanwhile, the Government goes on as best it can with its brave task of reconciling all these elements and holding up the Republic, as every other monarchical country in Europe will have to do when, in the course and sweep of the modern movement, its time will have come for trying to establish something representing liberty, equality and fraternity on the ruins of its old self. The Government has its own way of doing this, and it is generally incomprehensible to the amazed world looking on. It lets a man like Guérin go on protesting against the existing order of things by having a little "private five o'clock revolution," and calling his house "Fort Chabrol," because it knows that it has no constitutional right to shed Guérin's blood for a thing of this sort, and if it does it will be sure to fall. It does not want to fall because it has something else to do. It knows that the real danger for France does not lie in a monarchic revolution, but in a coup d'état by some daring person who may take advantage of the general indifference to establish a dictatorship. It was for this reason that the High Court was summoned. It was not because of a monarchist plot—there is always a monarchist plot, and it never has any chance of succeeding—but because Déroulède, acquitted by the Civil Court, and his attempt to persuade General

Roget to march to the Elysée tacitly approved therefore by the Jury of the Seine—and this means by the common people of Paris—set an example which was a real danger for the Republic. The real object of the summoning of the Haute Cour was purely to disqualify Déroulède.

Perhaps some day, not far off, France will succeed in bringing about the radical reforms she needs for carrying on her Republic, such as diminishing the number of Deputies, increasing the prerogatives of the Senate, and persuading the President to use more frequently his power of suspending or dissolving the Chamber or both houses. Perhaps some day, not far off, we shall see her set up a dictatorship. Who knows! The great mass of the people do not want a change, to disorganize the existing order of things, and increase all the difficulties of the struggle for existence; but if it came they would probably accept it quietly, for their interests are outside of politics, and they do not much care how they are governed.

# *The Elysee.*

Nothing in France is harder for Americans to understand than her President. We expect to find a French President filling some such place as ours at home. I well remember the first time I was in Paris during a presidential election. In view of the general upturning of the country from one end to the other which such a thing means to us, I looked for something extraordinary from the French in the way of demonstration, and when nothing happened at all, it was almost impossible not to feel a little defrauded. Paris did not even seem enough interested in her new Chief Magistrate to go out to the Champs Elysées to watch him driving back in triumph from Versailles. And I remarked once more that the French were an extraordinary people, and that it was invariably the unexpected which happened with them; without stopping to think that the expected in every country is only what, from our own standpoint, we expect.

This is not so much due to a difference of temperament between the French and ourselves as it is to a difference of condi-

tions. The Frenchman does not excite himself over his presidential candidate, for the simple reason that he seldom has a candidate. The President of France is the representative of the people, but he is not elected by the people. He is chosen only by the two Chambers, and up to the very day he is sworn into office he has often never been heard of by the greater part of his compatriots. I remember the coming in of Felix Faure. People had heard of a Sebastian Faure, an anarchist, and they said: "Who is this man Faure who has been made President? Is it the anarchist?" Then, once in office, the new President is nominally the head of the State, and yet he is not allowed to have a voice in anything that goes on. Even the few powers which the Constitution gives him, such as those of dissolving or suspending the two Chambers, he dares not exercise for fear of being suspected of meditating a coup d'état. When he is elected he is generally a simple bourgeois, living in a plain, unostentatious fashion; and then the French love for traditional pomp forces him from one day to another to exhibit himself as the central figure in a cortége of officers, to drive in a State carriage with horses mounted by postilions, in a livery which makes an American think of a circus rider or a toreador, to give banquets to sovereigns, and to live in a palace. His relations to the people, I should say, are about as

close as those of the president of a railroad to his passengers; and yet their instincts demand that he shall in some way correspond to their notions of a king. So there is no greater anomaly than the President; and his false position is always sure to be ridiculed by the changing, chaffing Parisian populace.

I am often asked if the man in office is popular. I should say no French President was ever really popular. Whatever position he takes appears to be always exactly the contrary of what he should have done. Jules Grévy, for instance, was a politician and eloquent public speaker, whose remarkable good sense had a large share in the ruin of the Empire and the founding of the Republic. But as he succeeded MacMahon, who fell because he showed he was in favor of a monarchial restoration, Grévy judged that his own rôle ought to be purely representative, with no influence whatever upon the course of affairs. So he organized his household on a scale of the most republican simplicity, like that of a simple citizen. This was precisely what was thrown in his face. He was called a concierge and a niggard, and was caricatured in shirt sleeves and a cotton nightcap.

Sadi Carnot, to avoid Grévy's mistakes, went to the other extreme. He set up a *train de maison* which cost him each year nearly all his private income, and he multiplied his tours

through the country, his receptions, his official visits. Then people began to reproach in him what they had clamored for in Grévy. His caricatures represented him as an automaton with a dress suit glued to his body, lifting his hat and bowing at regular intervals like a mechanical doll.

Felix Faure's ease of manner, and the tact with which he received the Russian Emperor, the Parisians naturally pronounced the false elegance and pretentiousness of a parvenu. If he had lived a little longer I am not at all sure that they would not have accused this simple business man, who was once a tanner, of being too much of an aristocrat. There has hardly been time to find in Emile Loubet exactly the opposite defects to those of his predecessors; but this will surely come. Has he not already been accused of lacking in decorum? He left a State procession to throw himself in the arms of his old mother at Montelimar.

The fact is, that France has been too long ruled by kings and emperors to be able to comprehend as its head a man who is something less than a king, and more than kind. He is a paradox, and there is a fitness in his living in a place like the Elysée, which in itself is an anomaly as well. It is a little less than a palace, and more than an ordinary private hotel; and, oddly enough, almost ever since it was built it has been occupied only by

personages whose position in the State was undefined. For a long time it was the home of Madame de Pompadour, a woman who was treated like a queen and feared like a Prime Minister, but who, after all, was nothing but an adventuress. Then, Josephine spent there the month before her divorce, when she was still an Empress in name and yet already dethroned. Murat, not born a king, but only a simple soldier of fortune, awaited there the precarious crown of Naples. Napoleon spent in it the three days after Waterloo, and signed there his second abdication; and after him, strangely enough, came Wellington. The Duc de Berry, that son of a king who was never to be a king, lived there up to his tragic death. From 1849 to 1852, Louis Bonaparte lived in this palace as "Prince President," and planned there the coup de force that was to make of him Napoleon III. And, finally, it was from the Elysée that the beautiful Eugénie de Teba, the greatest adventuress of all to the French, went to that marriage which was to make of her the last sovereigness of France.

The house is like its history. It is of all epochs and of all styles. Seen from the Faubourg St. Honoré, its façade no doubt equals that of any of those fine old hotels built in the Eighteenth Century for princes or bankers, and called "The Follies." It has the squareness of the time of Louis XIV., and

some of the elegance of that of Louis XV. It is a type of the transition from one to the other, and, even if we did not know the date when it was built, we could divine it—1718.

But as you drive down the Faubourg St. Honoré and recognize the home of the President by the sentries in uniform on either side of the great stone gates, it is only necessary to cast one glance into the courtyard to find at once a shocking anachronism. This is the glass cage which surrounds the flight of steps leading up to the entrance, called by the President's household the "monkey palace," because it looks so much like the great monkey cage at the Jardin d'Acclimatation. This was the work of President Carnot. No glory of being President of his country could ever quite equal, to Sadi Carnot, that which came to him when as a young man and an engineer he built an aqueduct that became celebrated in all Savoy. Of what profit was it to France to have an engineer at its head, if he did not build something? And Carnot constructed, too, a wonderful ballroom, made, like the Eiffel tower, entirely of iron, which ran along the whole right wing of the house. The left wing was built by Louis Napoléon, and Grévy left his mark in a great salle looking out on the garden. Only one thing has been left untouched through all these changes of a century and a half, and that is the charming little pavil-

ion in the garden which was once the "silver boudoir" of Madame de Pompadour. From this to the "monkey palace" might be taken as an exact measure of the transformation which the years have wrought in the taste and ideas of the successive inhabitants of the Elysée.

If the position of the President is a contrast to ours, the inside life of the Elysée offers a still greater one. Our President may be ceremonious or not as he pleases. It depends only on his former training. But the President of France is like a hapless fly caught by chance in a great spider's web of traditional ceremonies. All his walk of life is regulated by a mysterious something called the Protocol, which takes outward form in as many as eight or ten people, under a chief, M. Crozier, whose only business is to see that he and everybody around him conduct themselves according to rule. Nobody knows exactly why this degree of ceremony is kept up, and still less would any one know how to do away with it. When the President goes to a gala performance at the Opera, or at the Comédie Française, the Director comes to meet him at the door with a torch-light in his hand, and escorts him to his box, exactly as in the days of royalty. This is written somewhere, in some old book of statutes, as one of the duties of a director of a state theatre. Who would have the authority to

say at any particular day of any particular year that this old custom should come to an end? The President never appears officially to any person, or in any place, without having the details regulated by some such tradition which has passed into a rule. Even his unofficial acts do not appear to an American to be exactly characterized by simplicity. Take, for instance, President Faure's morning ride in the Bois, which he always took at eight o'clock in the morning. He was always attended by the member of his military household specially charged with the superior direction of his cavalry and his hunting. The President and the officer left the Elysée together, in the President's coupé, the "pioupiou" on guard saluting as they got into the carriage. They drove to the *Rond point des cavaliers* in the Bois, where was found the famous piqueur Montjareret, with a groom holding the President's beautiful thoroughbred, and the director-general of the military cabinet, of the Elysée. With this cortège, the President started out for his ride, a little in advance of the others, the groom bringing up the rear on a thoroughbred which was a present from the Emperor of Morocco. Even if President Loubet goes for a little stroll on the boulevards, he is always followed by detectives in plain clothes.

As French Presidents when they enter of-

fice have always, like our own, reached an age when their habits are pretty well settled for life, they have never taken any more kindly than ours to this surveillance and to the pomp of courts, and consequently live lives whose two halves are paradoxes. Felix Faure built in the grounds of his villa at Havre a little summer-house where he could peacefully smoke his pipe, out of reach of the Protocol. He never occupied the state bedroom at the Elysée, but had fitted up for his own use a room with a little iron bed with white curtains, and simple furniture such as you may see exposed at the Bon-Marché. Neither did he write at the splendid Louis XIV. table, ornamented with exquisite brasses chiseled by Gouttière, which is shown in the public office of the President. He worked in a private room arranged like a business man's office, with a plain counting-house desk. Carnot also fitted up for himself a private suite of rooms, and Loubet is already following the example of his predecessors.

None of the Presidents have left behind them in the Elysée the slightest trace of their individuality. Even the pictures that they have bought have not been chosen from any personal preference. No President has ever had any taste for art. Every one purchased so many pictures a year, but they were

always chosen by the secretaries or even by the architect of the palace. The only souvenir of a presidential occupant that I know of to be found in the Elysée is Grévy's pet duck, which still swims about in one of the basins of the garden, and answers to the name of "Baby," which Grévy gave it. President Grévy was very fond of playing billiards, but there is nothing personal about his billiard-table, which is still there. It is exactly like any other billiard-table.

For that matter the French President, also like our own, has very few moments for the indulgence of his personal tastes. The only time he has to himself is before nine o'clock in the morning. After that, the hour from nine to ten is devoted to the reading of his mail, which has been carefully sorted for him, and to the signing of documents. He does not make laws, but he makes decrees. He can decree, for instance, that the Exposition of 1900 shall open on the 15th of April. The rest of his time is given up to the Council meetings, the holding of audiences, the making of state visits, the giving of receptions, the visiting of hospitals, the opening of Salon or Exposition, the going in state to the races, or to some one of the thousand and one places which old monarchical traditions require the head of the State to solemnize with his presence. The same sort of thing must be kept up

at night, for the ball of the Hôtel de Ville cannot be opened without the President, nor the Cadet's ball, nor any similar function. Strange importance given to the representative rôle of a man whose part with his ministers is no more than that of mediator or peacemaker! The President who did not play this to his satisfaction resigned—Casimir Perier. It goes without saying that this paradoxical ruler does not hold open receptions, like ours at the White House, where any citizen may walk in and shake hands with him. The Protocol decides who shall be received by him when he is at home, on two mornings of the week. This privilege is granted to the ordinary mortal only if he write, a few days beforehand, to the director of the "civil cabinet," or to the "General Secretary of the Presidency."

In curious contrast to the fictitious splendor of the President's position is the utter effacement of the ladies of the Elysée. I went to Paris just at the time when Mrs. Cleveland's youth and loveliness were reigning in our republican court at home, and a large part of the daily press was filled with details about her personality. We knew just how many buttons she wore on her glove, and whether the baby had a silver or a coral rattle. In France it was hard to understand why more was not said about Madame Carnot, and this

Decoration over the Door of the Elysée.

The President's Library at the Elysée.

silence seemed still more inexplicable in the case of the next President's young daughter, Mlle. Lucie Faure. She had even written a little book, an account of a journey in Italy she made with her father, and nobody had ever heard of it. At home it would have been in every house in the land. Officially, the women of a President's family do not exist. For that matter, nearly everything pertaining to the status of woman in France still rests legally upon traditions which had their rise in the attitude of the little Corsican towards women. On that point he was mediæval. Personally the feminine contingent of the Elysée must be rather glad that the Constitution does not recognize them, for it lets the chief lady of the Elysée keep up her ordinary habits of life. She can have her "day at home," and go out and come in like any of her friends. But as a wife with no official position, she can meet many of her husband's guests only through courtesy. This was especially noticeable when the Czar and Czarina visited Paris. In no way did the young Empress show more her exquisite tact than in her attitude towards the wives of present and past Presidents. She sent for Mme. and Mlle. Lucie Faure to come and see her, and the first thing she did after leaving the train, on the very day of her arrival, was to go and make a visit to the wife of France's

murdered President, Madame Carnot. She had been at her grandmother's, Queen Victoria, she said, when the terrible news of the assassination was received in England, and should never forget the grief of the entire court; and she made up her mind then that if she ever went to Paris the first thing she should do would be to express her sympathy to Madame Carnot. This spontaneous bit of womanly feeling in a sovereign of the most ceremonious court in Europe, on an official visit, is, I think, a charming thing in history.

I make it a rule to go to one ball at the Elysée in every administration. All these functions are exactly alike, except for the change in the chief figureheads, and they are as characteristically anomalous as everything about the palace. The Protocol makes them, in many respects, of remarkable spectacular splendor in their appointments, while these serve as a background for the most motley collection of people that could be gathered together under one roof. The ranks of motionless guards that line the steps as you enter, in their statuesque impressiveness, might be the famous Swiss of the Tuileries. The Protocol sees that you have sensation of a presentation of some sort as you enter the President's presence, announced by a magnificent functionary wearing a glittering chain. He shouts your name half across a

great empty room, in the centre of which stands the Chief Magistrate, wearing the broad red ribbon of Commander of the Legion of Honor, surrounded by the glittering uniforms of his military household, and the sparkling jewels and brilliant toilets of the ladies of the President's family and the wives of the ministers. The President does not shake hands, nor do any of those receiving with him.

The Protocol also makes the music and the flowers and the supper of due impressiveness, the official world is as splendid as at a court; and the rest is made up of the crushing, pushing ten thousand who keep the governmental machine in motion. You see extraordinary types. The men are all in evening dress. "It were better to do without a bed in Paris than without a dress coat," Guy de Maupassant made one of his characters say. But all the women have not evening gowns. I shall never forget one who looked as though she had been upholstered for the occasion, in just such Utrecht velvet as was used formerly for furniture, while her ornaments were worsted tassels such as decorate chairs hanging from various parts of her person. But the crowd is not more incongruous than the palace itself, a background of pure style, strewn with a heterogeneous collection of bric-à-brac, relics of all the administrations. In a little salon, which was once Napoleon's sleeping-room,

there is a priceless tapestry, after cartoons by Raphael, representing the judgment of Paris, which once belonged to Madame de Maintenon, and was cut up by her to have some clothing put on to the Three Beauties, which she considered too nude. But it looks down on a hearth-rug of modern Beauvais, where a monstrosity of a stuffed lion, by Gérôme, reposes in a bed of such flowers as grow on Berlin wool-work.

Everywhere are the same anachronisms. A magnificent vase of old Sèvres is side by side with one of those impossible alabaster clocks of the time of Louis Philippe, of which the French Garde-Meuble contains an inexhaustible supply for its State palaces and other buildings. There could be no greater contrast than that between the old tapestried chairs in the private salon, once used familiarly by Marie Antoinette and Madame Adelaide, and the simple bourgeois, plain *meres de famille*, who now use them; and from the precious carpets on the floors have been torn off successively the fleurs de lys and crowned *Ns*, to put in their places emblems of the Republic.

# *In the Ministries.*

The greatest goddess of France is her "Administration," a goddess whose temples are called "Grand Ministères." I never look at one of these without a feeling of melancholy. They seem to me nothing more or less than terrible Molochs, into which are thrown every year hundreds of enthusiastic boys just from college, to be given up only when all the energy and initiative and independence have been crushed out of them by years of monotonous routine, passed over eternal papers. The full meaning of the word Administration is something which only dawns upon you by degrees, if you live in France. You know that your postman belongs to it, and it seems natural. But little by little you discover that the Administration means not only the postman, but the policeman, and the sweeper of the streets, and the custom-house officer, and the china painter at Sèvres, and the school teacher, and the trained nurse, and the tapestry maker of the Gobelins, and the curé, and the mayor, and the bishop, and the professor, and the judge; that each one of these is an integral part of a gigantic machine

extending from one end of the country to the other, made up of hundreds of thousands of employés, whose sole centre and direction is in Paris.

Generally you get this part of your education either by coming up against this in some way yourself, or by seeing some one else do it. My first experience of the kind I have never forgotten. It was in a hospital, where I had a friend invalided, but not laid low, and under a surgeon's care. The place was the single *maison-de-santé*, or private paying hospital, in Paris, which is under the State. The charges in it were something like twenty dollars a week, everything included. When my friend's breakfast came up in the morning there was no sugar for the coffee, and she asked for some. "The Administration does not give sugar," was the reply. She asked for butter for her bread. "The Administration does not give butter," was the same response. This regulation appeared to be purely arbitrary. The Administration gave certain unexpected things with lavishness; yet neither bribes, threats nor prayers could extract a bit of butter or a single lump of sugar from the institution during her entire stay.

Since then, how many times have I picked up the Paris *Herald* to find from the various letters with which the ingenuous

tourist instructs the public that in some way he has run up against this same vague but mighty force. It is generally through some such thing as a detail connected with the regulations at a railway station, or a performance at the Comédie Française, or the sending of a post-office order, which he apparently seems to consider has been invented for his particular annoyance, to infringe on his rights as a free-born American citizen. He has never seen anything of the kind, he says, in the glorious old town at home that he comes from, and wonders what they would think of it there, and he usually ends by giving the French some advice on the simplifying of their arrangements in general, in the apparently trusting faith that a suggestion from some advanced person is all that is needed to make a change. Little does he realize that every one of these petty details is as much a part of the general structure of things as the institution of the President of the Republic, and that you might almost as well try to change the movements of a planet in its orbit as the least of these. Everything in France is regulated by this colossal organization, which looks with the same benevolent interest not only after such great things as the maintenance and execution of the old laws, and the new ones passed by the Chamber, and the measures ordered by the

President, and the decrees of the Ministers, and the organizing of the army, but such details as the kind of material that shall be put on a match head—which explains why French matches never strike—or whether a morsel of sugar shall be comprised in the repast of a patient in a hospital. You come to feel, in time, as though it were part of the integral structure of things; as inseparably France as her network of rivers.

All over the country the workings of this machine are precisely the same. With us, each State is attached to the soil by its own fibres. It is represented at Washington, but it can live independently. In France everything is regulated from Paris, and the entire people uphold the Administration, because every one, either in himself or through his son, or his brother, or his friend, represents some little integral part of it. The longer you live there the more you realize that the French do not want to change the machine. They are willing to have it put in repair every twenty or thirty years, and to introduce, perhaps, a few modern improvements, but they could not actually conceive of any other way of doing things. If you trepanned the nation, I am quite sure you would find in the construction of their brains little coils of ideas somewhere spelling out the administrative language. However ironically the

Frenchman may utter the proverbial phrase, "Our Administration which is the envy of Europe," you may be very sure that in his heart he admires it religiously and respects it profoundly.

Why has it stayed when so much has gone? I used often to wonder. There are excellent psychological reasons for its survival. It is stable, unchanging; everything that the French are not; as admirably adapted to their needs as the honey-comb to the bees. But I am quite sure its real hold comes from eminently practical reasons, and three of these in particular. The first is the special kind of compulsory education which has been enforced during the last twenty-five years. It has produced an entire generation of young men to whom a semi-classical education has given a distaste for trade or any sort of business; the second is the establishment of universal suffrage and the spoils system, so that every Senator and every Deputy needs a bone of some sort to throw to his constituents, and would have to invent places if they did not already exist; and the last is the national character of the people and their intense love for staying quietly at home. They must ensure to themselves some existence which will let them stay comfortably in France to the end of their days.

It is hard for us to realize how difficult it is to be able to look forward to an assured

existence in this old world, where every place is always already occupied. Go to the Halles, the great central market, some morning before the dew is yet off the fruits and vegetables, and as you watch the workings of the enormous machine by which Paris is provisioned, think that the right to sell green groceries there descends in fief from generation to generation, and that the men who auction these off to the dealers and the hotels all over the city stand on the very spot on a certain pavement where the buyers who preceded them have stood in direct line for over two hundred years! How many people are looking on and watching for the moment when anyone shall drop out! I am sure that this thought of dropping out at home is one explanation of why the French are no greater colonizers; this and their national character, again. Much observation, not only of their characteristics, but of the English, has led me to deduct another reason for the French lack of enterprise in colonizing from the attitude of both towards the foreigner. Everything French is always the best thing to every Frenchman, as everything English is to the Englishman. The difference between the two, however, is that to differ from an Englishman is to be in the wrong. Then, with his belief in his mission for imposing his point of view on the world, it becomes his moral duty

Under the Eiffel Tower.

Place du Châtelet, Victory Fountain.

to put you right. But to differ from a Frenchman is only to be stupid, and the best thing to do with stupid people is to leave them alone. When a country is neither French nor likely ever to become French, what is the use of wasting time trying to colonize it? It is much better to stay at home.

It is easy to see why it would hardly be considered respectable for a man to stay at home without an assured place in a highly organized society like the French; and therefore it becomes quite as much a matter of concern for parents to establish their sons as it is to marry their daughters.

"What are you going to be when you are a man?" I once asked the charming little son of one of my French friends.

He thought for a moment. "I am going to be either a coachman or a bishop or a washwoman," he answered, finally.

This incongruous selection of occupations was natural in a French baby. He wanted to be a coachman because he loved horses, a bishop because of the splendor of the vestments he saw in church, and a washwoman because the happy blanchisseuses knelt by the river banks and dabbled all day long in the water, which he was forbidden by his mother to touch.

But at ten you will find this love for horses, water and finery transformed in the aver-

age French boy to a burning desire to be either a soldier or a sailor. Either one of these is the vocation of almost all boys of that age. It is then that his mother begins now and then to wear a frown as she sits over her work, and the father to shake his head. Naturally they do not want to thwart the imperious genius of their son—who of course has genius; but soldiers are exposed to many dangers, such as battles, and sailors must live far from home and are at the mercy of the wave. That means a checkered existence for the boy, and much anxiety for his parents at the end of their days. They do not say much, but they lead him on to push as far as possible his studies; to take a bachelor's degree, and very likely to read for the bar, and pass his examinations. Meanwhile he has enough leisure to see a little of student life, with an illusion of independence.

Then, as simple soldier, he does one year of military service, which is quite enough to disgust him with the profession of arms for the rest of his days. Finally, at twenty-one or twenty-two, he finds himself face to face with the necessity of deciding on an occupation—and his father! The father wears his most serious air; he reads his son a lecture on the future; and he ends by alluding to his friend the Deputy so-and-so, who has great influence with one of the ministers, or to an-

other who is a *gros-bonnet* of the Administration. A few good introductions, an easy examination, and in only a short time the youth may be settled for life. The boy has no experience of the world except of existence at home. How can he be expected to have personal initiative and independence when they are something that he has neither inherited nor that have ever been taught him? He knows nothing about money except the financial problems which have been offered by his modest allowance, and the slender salary in question seems enormous compared to any sum he has ever had the handling of before. Perhaps, more than anything else, he is tempted, too, by the idea of having a defined position, and the end is that a few months later he is one more recruit grafted into the immense army of functionaries. The minds of his parents are at rest, for the bread of their boy is assured.

The boy takes his seat at his desk, and in the beginning has all the enthusiasm of his years. He gets together his materials to build a bridge to the moon no less than the youth of that other Republic of whom Thoreau wrote the words; and then added that as middle-ages man, they generally concluded to build a woodshed with those materials. All young men, when they first go into a Ministry, expect to be journalists outside of office hours; to make

plays; to write great novels, like Guy de Maupassant, who was also a functionary, or to be remarkable painters, like René Billotte, who was another.

Then, gradually the greater part of them allow themselves little by little to become hypnotized by the regular movement of the machine. They fall more and more into a monotonous routine, broken only by their marriage possibly with a daughter of their chef, and certainly with some one with that dot which, on general principles, a woman quite rightly to my mind in the Old World brings to marriage in order to take her share in the expenses of the common existence. If they achieve their highest ambitions they get to be chefs themselves; and finally, at sixty they look for the last time into the tiny mirrors of their offices, see that their hair is gray, and that they have grown old without knowing where the years have gone to; and then they go off into some little corner with their pensions of four or five thousand francs a year—to die soon after from having made a change of ennuis!

The very thought of the machine hypnotizes me as I write and frame the monotonous sentences describing it coming from the monotonous little corners of my brain in which its details are stored. If so much generalization seems to make an exaggerated picture, re-

member that the functionaries in the Chamber of Deputies outnumber all the business men and agriculturists and manufacturers put together, and that some one has lately published a statement, with statistics to prove it, that there is one functionary in France to every ten inhabitants. From this he draws the conclusion that the dawn of the Twenty-first Century will see nothing but a nation of employés. This is the fantastic menace of the statistic fiend; but it also contains in it the warning voice of the Cassandra.

The French know perfectly well themselves the elements of decadence which lie in this organization. They accepted vigorous arraignment of it in Demolins's "Anglo-Saxon Superiority" with that calm with which we say the worst possible things about ourselves, and then, with the exception, perhaps, of Jules Lemaître, everybody promptly forgot the book. But not knowing too well how to do without the machine, they compromise on a general cry against the present system of education, which makes all the boys ready to go into it. A French school-boy is to me the most dispiriting thing in the country. "Oh, base-ball, football, golf, boating, Junior Proms, cotillons, or any other words bringing with them a whiff of the strong, breezy, bracing air of an American college, to thee I sing!" I always feel like saying as I look upon him. The Lycées and col-

leges are doing something for him with a movement towards athletics; but what a melancholy sight he is in the private schools, when he takes his sad promenade through the Paris streets with his companions, marshaled two by two like a girl's boarding school, under the charge of a "pion" such as Alphonse Daudet once was, or a priest.

The boys under the last are the "good Republicans brought up by the Jesuit fathers" to whom Abel Hermant alluded in his play; and they are one of the elements for keeping alive the possibility of some great future tragedy like the "affaire." Most of them will probably go into the army, the great resource for the sons of the nobility; and their education is keeping alive traditions directly opposed to the spirit of free institutions, and the Republic. As surely as the world moves, some day some great crash between all these opposing elements that can instantly be taken up by all the politicians on both sides, will again be inevitable. The best educated of the young men, who should be the greatest influences towards an intelligent public opinion, will not be in the active arena. They will be in the Government, which means outside of things. The best of our college graduates are not in politics at home, it is true. But at home we have an intelligent public opinion. The French have not.

First Communicants.

Coming Out from Mass at St. Germain des Prés.

There is nothing to make a visit to the temples of the great governmental Moloch, into which go so much youth, especially interesting. They are all alike; great gray stone structures, with sombre, echoing courts, as impersonal and immutable in appearance as though Finance, Agriculture, and the others in proportion as they had grown, had projected for themselves visible shells. Within are labyrinths of bare white corridors, relieved only by gray arrows pointing to inscriptions such as "Direction Générale," "Bureau des Ordonnancements," with here and there an occasional upholstered door, indicating the office of a "grand chef." Beware how you speak to the garçons or office boys you meet in these long corridors! They will only answer your questions if you address them in terms of the most exquisite politeness. They are there for life. They are functionaries as much as the Minister himself, and have this advantage over him that they stay on when the Government falls, while he goes. The concierge at the door has also a life position, as you can tell by the calm air of superiority with which, as you pass, he goes on reading his eternal newspaper in his little lodge, tapestried with keys, without so much as honoring you with a glance.

A friend one day offered to take us to the Ministry of Public Instruction, where he knew some one in the very office in which once worked

the man who has made the greatest name of all the functionaries, Guy de Maupassant. The idea of seeing the very desk on which was drafted "*Boule de Suif*," and the room from which came the materials for "*L'Héritage*," tempted us like a pilgrimage, and we went.

The old office of the great writer was a little place, measuring perhaps twelve feet in each direction, whose walls were entirely covered with green paste-board boxes with white labels which stared at you like blinking eyes. It had a single window looking out over the roofs. By leaning over you could just catch sight of the flight of stone steps leading up to the hotel of the Minister, and of the cockade of his coachman; a celebrated coachman, who had driven every head of that department for twenty-five years.

There were three inhabitants in the room; a pale young man finishing with feverish haste the copying of a letter of seventeen pages explaining to a country school teacher, with many quotations from ministerial circulars, that he had made a mistake of twelve centimes in his accounts; a thin and melancholy ancient "sous-off," whose functions were to classify correspondence, but who at that moment was engaged in the classifying of a collection of postage stamps on his own account; and, finally, a jovial personage, who we were told was a little "touched" and was only kept through char-

ity. This was the single thing which could evoke the souvenir of poor de Maupassant, and the little cage was interesting only as an exact model of all the other little cages in which hundreds of thousands of functionaries at that moment were doing the same copying, transcribing and classifying.

Other celebrities than Guy de Maupassant have gone out from them, however. Among these are André Theuriet, the novelist, and Courtéline, the writer, and Armand Sylvestre, and the painter René Billotte, of whom I have already spoken. Huysmans, the author of "En Route," another celebrated functionary, upon his retirement with a pension went to live under the shadow of the old convent of Ligurgé, and has just become a priest. He has not lost for this a Frenchman's *esprit.* Lately he wrote to a friend upon a sheet of paper bearing the letter-head of his old office: "*Ministére de l'Intérieur,*" which he had quaintly changed into "*Ministre de la Vie Intérieure.*"

To think of the years in which such hands as that were occupied in writing only the endless trivialities of administrative detail! I once saw an illustration of the kind of thing on which the Ministry of the Interior busies itself. In a little corner of France some cherry trees planted on the public highway bore fruit, which no one gathered.

An inhabitant of that part of the country wrote to Paris and offered to buy the cherries of the State. He made his demand in March, so as to have plenty of time to get the answer before the fruit season. It came at the end of November. What care the State takes of her roads, however; how endlessly she looks after the general well-being in thousands of ways! You feel sometimes as though existence for the French were one great personally-conducted tour, where everything was so arranged and planned out for them that they had no responsibility, and were free to enjoy the scenery as they went along. This great organization, whose roots are so deeply intertwined in the sub-soil of national life, keeps the country steady at bottom, no matter what agitations shake her surface. And its iniquitous presence makes "France" a very real and palpable thing to her people. I can quite believe the story of the peasant who was found at the door of the Chamber asking to be taken to "The State." He had a goose in the basket on his arm, he said, which he had brought as a present for him.

# PART III.

# THE ART LIFE AND ITS INSTITUTIONS.

# *The Museum of Cluny.*

I never see the Museum of Cluny without wondering why someone with money and taste does not copy it, stone by stone, to make for himself a princely dwelling. I know of no more beautiful house than this, in which Gothic architecture, flowered here and there with Italian Renaissance, blossoms upon the ruins of the old Roman palace of Julian the Apostate.

Cluny was the first bachelor apartment house that was ever made, I fancy. Bachelorhood was no temporary estate with the abbés of Cluny, for whom it was built. They were younger sons, who came into the church irrevocably with their coming into the world, and into an abbey before they arrived at the age of reason. They practised a healthy sort of Christianity which kept their souls well alive, and appreciated a pied à terre in Paris. This was in 1490, just two years before Columbus realized his idea of providing on a colossal scale footholds for the world's superfluous sons, without distinction of age. These cadets of the house of Bourdon and Ambroise were grand seigneurs, intimate friends and kins-

men of kings, and a jolly lot, who felt no remorse at leaving the details of their profession to their monks, while they donned cuirasses under their long robes, cavalcaded, and played the gallant at the levee of the king, their relative.

We have to keep well in mind these manners of the day to thoroughly understand the charm of this old palace, which comes not only from the exquisite harmony of its proportions, but also from the unexpectedness, the contradictoriness in its ornamentation, the very emblem of the time in which it was built. A cathedral is frozen music, Coleridge said. Mr. Tom Appleton called the Boston Art Museum frozen Yankee Doodle. Cluny might be called frozen fifteenth century. It is at any rate an exact symbol of that epoch which saw everywhere such a strange mingling of contradictions; the century in which France was led, and, what is more curious still, without seeming in the least to wonder at it, by two women of exactly opposite types, the one, Agnes Sorel, the most coquettish, frivolous and beautiful of her sex, the other, the purest incarnation of religious faith and patriotism the world has seen, Jeanne d'Arc.

You have only to look at its details to see this; windows filled with tracery as delicately wrought as lace looking down on a crenelated

wall, such as you would find in a moated chateau; a Cupid jocularly striding a dolphin side by side with the cockleshells of St. Jacques and a cardinal's hat; a gargoyle grotesquely twisting its ape-like head which has for pendant a seraphim, full of candid grace. Even the old device that for five hundred years has been graven in the court is ambiguous: "Servare Deo regnare est," "To serve God is to reign," in one reading, "To reign is to serve God," in the other. Everywhere you come on the unexpected; and this naïve mingling of profane and religious does not shock, because the whole combines to give a perfect impression of art, and has the harmony of all really beautiful and artistic things.

Nevertheless this mediæval Gothic style, in the moments when I do not take it for granted, sets me perpetually wondering how mankind was ever inspired to create such a thing. It is taken directly from nature, while in our day architecture is the art which of all arts gets the least from nature. This, too, in a time when painters, sculptors, musicians and writers have more deliberately broken with traditions and gone to nature for their inspiration than ever before. In the Middle Ages, however, the architect as well as the painter had his sketch-book and noted in it religiously anything that appealed to him in

natural harmonies, the curves in the lines of a mountain, the bend of a plant arrested in its growth by a rock, the supple movements of a fawn, the inspiration given by a forest in the pale light of the moon. Then, instinctively, no doubt, but at all events, justly, for the simple reason that he was sincere, he formed from these a decorative system, based on the principles of nature's designs. He himself, too, was a master builder, and his workmen put as much freedom and devotion into a single capital as the designer of the building into its whole.

To feel all this we have only to enter the little chapel of Cluny on the second floor. How did any architect ever solve such an extraordinary problem as that of giving to this tiny room, which measures scarcely more than eight yards in each direction, the grandeur of a cathedral nave? To try to analyze the means by which such an impression is produced would be like trying to analyze genius itself. Is it from this niche forming an altar projecting from the wall like the prow of a ship, and delicately illuminated with a mysterious light by the jeweled panes set in the tiny windows in the form of hands in prayer? Or is it from the single pillar in the centre, springing with the delicate grace of a fountain to expand in laces and interlaces upon the vault overhead? It is certainly from both

of these, and a hundred other details besides, trifling in themselves, but which, growing one out of the other, and all together into one, each exactly in the place to which it belongs, become transcended as a whole into something grand and imposing, with the very majesty of nature itself.

It only needs this one chapel, or Cluny as a whole, to learn the secret of Gothic architecture, and, indeed, of all the styles that succeeded it. Style was something free and natural in those days. It was determined by the character and expression to be given to the ensemble of a structure, and so it was that a man could build a house and a church with the same style, and have the one look like a house, and the other like a church; whereas in our time religious feeling must invariably be incarnated in something Gothic or Byzantine, while splendor in the way of a dwelling means to us a copy of one of the chateaux of Touraine, or the Trianon of Versailles, set down in one of our modern streets. The architect is no longer free. You would almost say that his art was a sort of patented thing in which the principal requisite was to have the right brand; that carrying everything before it in the market at present being the one stamped "École des Beaux Arts."

Since we are given to copying, however,

why not transplant Cluny? During its five hundred years of existence it seems to have been considered a fitting home for all sorts and conditions of people. Soon after it was finished, the abbés put it at the disposition of the kings of France, who lodged in it many distinguished guests: Mary of England, widow of Louis XII.; James the Fifth of Scotland, many Papal nuncios, an Abbess of Port Royal, and finally, at the end of the eighteenth century, the celebrated astronomers, Lalande and Messier. With the Revolution, like all the property of the State, it became national, and it afterward passed through different hands until, in 1843, it was sold to the State by M. du Sommerard, with the rare collection of bibelots and works of art which he had collected in it, and it became a Museum.

It is to me the most sympathetic and human of all the museums—this old hotel, left to us, as Victor Hugo said, "for the consolation of the artist." As a whole, it is the most perfect bibelot in existence. I love it in its interior and exterior, and everything that belongs to them both, in all their satisfying harmony; one of the most perfect expressions of beauty, and certainly of the lives of men and women of the past which the world has to offer us. As you wander through it you seem to be admitted to the very intimacy of a Duc de

Guise, or of one of those Queens who trailed through the rooms the white weeds that they wore as mourning for their royal husbands. In that room called "la chambre de la Reign Blanche" here is the bed, all dressed, with its coverlid embroidered with flowers and arabesques; the books of hours are still open at their illuminated pages, near a covered chair with arms wide spread, in order to lodge the heavy robes of brocade; upon the wrought andirons in the gigantic fireplace lie the great logs of other days; in the twilight in the background glimmer the panels of the bahuts of pear-tree or of thuya, where Hercules and Theseus in relief combat with complicated chimeras; through the open doors comes a reflection from the high polish of an armoire, or of a rare faïence. Just so it must have been in the time of a François 1er or a Henri IV. And the idea of this arrangement is not simply to make an amusing historical reproduction. It is to give to each object its true value, to bring out its real significance in form and color, so that even the most modest bibelot becomes an illustration of the law in art that a tone has value only through others that are beside it. A red near a yellow is quite a different thing from a red near a gold tone like a blue or green; and the same rule holds good in form. Look at the Salle des Faïences, and I am sure you will find, as

I do, something positively exhilarating in the effects in these rare porcelains. A pure, cold blue in a bit of Spanish faïence has next it a pale yellow, a deep blue a deep yellow; and notice this grotesque black china creature in the line above which so accents the whole! As your eye glances along the quiet richness of the Palissy potteries at the end of the room, and the fifteenth and sixteenth century grés, to fall suddenly upon the bright, living green of the bits of Chelsea ware in the vitrine next the balustrade, the whole place, at that instant, seems to exist only to make you feel it properly.

I love the sudden sensation of inspiration that comes as you go from the room filled with the Luca della Robbias into the one beyond in which is the old glass; all one side of it filled with tiny diamond panes, against which sky and leaves outside are in a net, while from stained medallions set in here and there the light apparently falls through green emeralds, or blue lapis lazuli, and sapphires upon the slender-stemmed, iridescent things in the vitrines. Where you may steep your soul in color, however, is in the room at the end of the second floor, hung with those Flemish tapestries of the time of Louis XII., in which mysterious ladies attended by languishing courtiers pursue their tranquil occupations in a delicious landscape of dull

Room of Francis I., Cluny Museum.

The Garden of Cluny.

golds and faded reds and greens and pomegranates to make a background for the strangely magnificent objects which are everywhere in the place. A mass of dull splendor is the Flemish altar-piece of gold, wrought into the figures of the Saviour and saints, and two little kings kneeling at their feet, which was given in 1079 to the Cathedral of Basle. And in the gold crowns of the old Gothic king Recesventhus, how the delicacy of their lovely filagree work, hung with cabochon amethysts and aquamarines, is intensified by contrast with the massive bands for encircling those mighty Gothic heads! The whole gains so in value, too, by being placed exactly in the spot in the room where it belongs, opposite the window, so that the light, again tinted by jeweled medallions, streams through the gold and the precious stones. The miniature gold boat of the Emperor Charles V. in the corner must have once been used as a centrepiece for his table, according to the fashion of his time. Paul Veronese, I remember, puts such a boat into the "Marriage of Cana" at the Louvre. Orchardson had one a few years ago in his Salon picture, "The Little Duke." And the chess-board in gold and rock crystal, called that of St. Louis, has served as pastime to many kings.

It would be a mistake, however, to think that the greater part of the 18,000 bibelots

which make up the collection of Cluny were either royal or princely objects. Though you can scarcely find one that is not a specimen of the most delicate art, they belong almost entirely to everyday life and the life of private individuals. I remember the French workman Bazin that Robert Louis Stevenson quotes in his "Inland Voyage," with whom he recommends a talk as an antidote to the visit of Zola's marriage party to the Louvre. He had delighted in the museums in his youth. "One sees there such little miracles of work," he said. "That is what makes the good workman. It kindles a spark." And it seems to be a fact that up to the time of the nineteenth century in France, and indeed in almost all civilized countries, the simplest workman had an innate sense of elegance of form, and beauty of detail, and even the most commonplace buyer had it like him. From the fifteenth century to the time of the Revolution, though there was sometimes a fancy for the horrible, as in the monsters of the churches, absolutely nothing was made in France that was ugly, even for the most commonplace uses. This we can see from Cluny, which contains the most perfect collection in existence of everyday things. Look at the charming series of locks and keys, of window fastenings and knockers for doors on the second floor, so beautifully wrought that

even iron has delicacy. They were simply picked up at random all over France. Some were found in the fields, and others in the bed of the Seine, and they came from the ordinary houses of the people. I can remember seeing myself a beautiful lock some years ago, on the door of a simple peasant's cottage of the fifteenth century, in the little village of Tallois, in Savoy. Is it not delightful to think of a time when art was so popularized? To convince yourself of this still further, notice these old keys of the sixteenth century, ending in an arched capital wrought in openwork, and surmounted with chimerical figures; or, better yet, the lock of this old German bahut of the fifteenth century, on which are represented St. John, St. James, and St. Barbara, and all of whose nails as well as its keyhole are masked with winged cherubim.

A little farther on the specimens of faïence in the room of the porcelains are only the basins, the plates, the sugar bowls, the vegetable dishes of everyday use, but there is not a single one of them, whether it comes from Moustiers, Marseilles, Strasbourg, Rouen, Nevers, Delft, or Raeren, which is not beautiful in form, and pleasant to the eye through the harmonious arabesques that decorate it, or the ornaments of fruit or animal that form fresh and charming reliefs in the shining enamel of the porcelain. In the vitrine of

Palissy potteries notice particularly the figure of a young nurse and child. How simple and natural it is, what a real little work of art, and yet we know beyond a doubt through an old book, the *mémoirs* of one of the physicians of Louis XIII., that it was originally nothing but a doll for the little king which cost only a few sous. I could go on multiplying examples of this sort, in armoires, chairs, tables, arms, stuffs, but will only point out one more. In the last room of the second floor—the gold room—in two vitrines full of some of the latest acquisitions to the Museum, is a whole collection of feminine trinkets and toilet articles. Each one seems to have an individual elegance and beauty, and to be interesting from an artistic point of view, which seems to be quite a different standpoint from that which so often apparently governs our dressing-tables nowadays. You would say this was that if one woman had sixty pieces of silver, another must have sixty-five.

"How can all these little marvels in everyday things be explained?" I often ask myself as I wander through Cluny. The feverish life of to-day, in which labor is so dear, and machinery has so largely replaced handwork, has naturally led us to be above everything else practical, and to want things that are useful and cheap. But that would not account

for the great taste that in other days pervaded all classes.

As I believe that all art is the direct result of some high intellectual and spiritual impulse, this general artistic standpoint must have come in the beginning, I think, from the inspiration given by the crusades. The wave of religious feeling which swept with them over Europe produced great artists and architects and churches; and the people, frequenting the churches, their susceptibilities quickened by this feeling, were educated into a universal love for beauty and consequently for art. This survived till the Revolution came, with its leveling tendencies, and the present century has gone on finishing its work.

This is why Cluny remains to the world a delight, even though it contains no chef d'œuvres, like the "Pilgrims of Emmaus," the "Winged Victory," or the Venus of the Louvre. I always feel as though I had discovered it, and must make it known to others; and when I see the tourist taking it sadly, as he generally does his museums, it is with difficulty I resist the impulse to rush up and try to make it known to him.

I should at least like to say to the men wandering about with Baedekers or with guides: "Look at the guardian's hats! They are one of the few things instituted by the great Napoleon that you will see in Paris now.

They were the Republican transformation under the Directoire of the old seigneurial hunting hat of the time of Louis XVI. The *incroyables* wore them, and Napoleon put them into the army. Now they are worn in France only by those guardians, the gendarmes, the generals, and the pupils of the École Polytechnique."

# *The Little Museums.*

Paris is a city of museums. You find them everywhere, of all kinds, for every sort of study. The great Museum of the Louvre, itself, is only a suite of museums, a collection of collections; each so valuable that a single one would make the glory of a great capital. From age to age have been gathered into it the flower of the artistic and archæological riches which France has been heaping up for so many generations. The national palaces, the churches and the private houses were so gorged with beautiful things in the centuries of splendor, that in spite of revolutions, and the ruin of old families, and the destruction of old things when new fashions came in, a great hoard of treasures has been handed down to the present day, and with the Republic has become the property of the State, which means that of everybody. Everybody is richer than anybody, the saying is; and nowhere is this truer than in Paris.

His capital, too, is always increasing. This is not only through the appropriations which his business manager, the State, makes every year, but through constant gifts and legacies.

These are the result of patriotic generosity, or the wish for posthumous fame, of above all the longing in the donor to preserve works of art which have often been family souvenirs that he has loved all his life. All roads in France lead to Paris, the great absorber of the artistic and intellectual force of the entire country; and no one museum would ever have been large enough to hold the steady flow of treasures and historical relics which have poured into the capital for ages past. So all over the city have sprung up the delightful places called "les petits musées."

You may live in Paris for years without particularly noticing many of these. The Musée Guimet, the Musée des Religions, for instance, on the Place d'Iéna, is one of my neighbors, and it almost goes without saying that I passed it constantly for two years without ever thinking of going in. Then, one day some one sent me an invitation to a Buddhist service to be held there by a Grand Lama from Thibet; one of those real Grand Lamas from that old convent of Lhassa, which the outsider never approaches without meeting instant death. The Trans-Caspian railway had sent him to Russia, and, hearing that there was a Musée des Religions in Paris, he supposed it a temple of his cult, and the laws of his religion obliged him to come and hold a service there. It was one

of those exotic sights that you get nowhere but in a great capital and made a deep impression on me through its contrasts; on one side all of the Parisian world that the little amphitheatre could hold; the diplomats and savants, and other men of mark, and beautiful and distinguished women; and on the other the strange figure of the priest, standing before an altar symbolizing the mystic number seven, making his genuflexions and manipulating his gleaming scarf of orange-red silk with an expression of almost sublime abstraction on his face.

I wondered how such a temple came to be there, and, on inquiring afterward, found that the entire museum was nothing but the collection of a M. Guimet, of Lyons. He made a fortune in selling dyes of his own invention, and used his leisure to collect precious things connected with the history and practice of the different religions of the world. His son went on with this after the father's death, and one day offered the whole collection to the City of Paris, who built a large museum to hold it, called it after the name of the donor, and put in the son as director, who is still there.

How many people you meet in France who collect, and what a price is put upon freedom here; upon time and liberty for following congenial occupations! "I am glad there are people in the word unselfish enough to be

great capitalists, to manage railways and corporations for my benefit," a Frenchman said to me not long ago. "They leave me free to spend my time on collecting and other things which really interest me."

So many of the museums are only collections abandoned to the State in their entirety by different individuals imbued with this spirit. The Musée Cernuski is one of these. It is made up of a great number of objects pertaining to Oriental art which the political economist Cernuski brought back from his travels in Asia and left to the State, with his own beautiful hotel in which to put them. Gustave Moreau, the painter, followed his example, and the greater part of his works have been classified with pious care by his disciples, in the house where he once lived, which has become the Musée Gustave Moreau.

If you tried to describe all the little individual museums within the great museums which have been given to the State in this way to complete the national collections, it would take not only the whole of one book, but of many. To mention only a few, however, what is said to be the richest collection of Chinese ceramics in the world is that in the wing of the Louvre lying along the Seine. It was given only a few years ago by a M. Grandidier, who still goes on classifying it and perfecting it at his own expense. Two-thirds of the lovely things in

In the Garden of the Tuileries.

The Tuilerie Gardens, Rue de Rivoli side.

the department of the art of the Renaissance in the Louvre were the princely gift of a simple employé of the administration, named Sauvegeot, who collected them at a time when Renaissance art was disdained by nearly everybody else. In the section of painting the entire collection La Caze was left in 1870 by a Dr. Louis La Caze, who lived in the happy time when he could become the possessor of a chef d'œuvre like Rembrandt's "Bethsabée" for 6,000 francs. At Cluny the salle devoted to objects pertaining to the Jewish religion is a gift of the Baroness Nathaniel de Rothschild.

In the Luxembourg almost all of the salle of impressionist painting, of such value for the study of French art, is a legacy of the painter Caillebotte. And, of course, if we went back very far in this sort of history we should come to the royal collections which were the foundations of the museums themselves.

When we come to think of knowing, or even getting a fairly satisfactory idea of the great ensemble of these precious collections, I am afraid the only way to do it would be to employ some such prescription as that of Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes for seeing the British Museum: "Take lodgings next door to it—in a garret, if you cannot afford anything better—and pass all your days at the Museum during the whole period of your natural life. At threescore and ten you will have some faint concep-

tion of the contents, significance and value of this great British institution." He could easily tell people, he said, how not to see it. When they had a spare hour, let them drop in and wander around. In fact, he seems to have come away from the galleries with the same feeling such places so often give the rest of us, of leaving in our memory nothing but a confused mass of impressions, much as the soldiers who sack a city go off with all the precious things they can snatch up, muddled into clothes—bags and pillow-cases. Dr. Holmes was an old man when he wrote this, but Hawthorne in his prime spoke in the same way, I remember. He was so tired when he saw the Elgin marbles that he wished they were all pounded up and made into mortar, so that he should not feel obliged to look at them.

There is one way of always being able at least to enjoy these Paris museums, and that is to consider them not as isolated collections, but as all belonging to one great family, of which each member helps to complete or explain or introduce the other, so that even a few minutes with any one fits in with our general acquaintance or intimacy with all, and gives us pleasure. It is a family, too, whose intimate history we are allowed to know, from its early beginnings down to its living types of to-day, and nothing else can teach us so much about what is the most interesting thing in

this world for study, the endless forms of development and expression of the human mind.

To show how one museum completes another, we need only take French painting, whose history can be studied in Paris from its very earliest origins. But we should have a very imperfect idea of the decorative sumptuousness belonging to the period of Louis XIV. which was sought for by such painters as Lebrun, Mignard and Rigaud, if we were satisfied simply to look at their work strung out in line in a salle of the Louvre. We must go to Versailles—so near Paris that it may be counted as a Parisian museum—and see the works of that time installed in the very places for whose decoration they were intended. The same thing is true for the time of Louis XV. and Louis XVI.

The painting of the time of the Revolution has some curious specimens, which we must look for at the Musée Carnavalet, side by side with the armoire from the Bastile, the flags of the national guards, the vitrines of uniforms of the "incroyables" and the "merveilleuses," if we want to appreciate the transition they mark between the art of a century ago and that of to-day. As for contemporary painting, it is clear that the Luxembourg is the indispensable sequel to the Louvre; but in its turn it is completed by the Musée de la Ville de Paris, at

Auteuil, and the galleries of the Hôtel de Ville, the only places in which you can see a decorative ensemble of Puvis de Chavannes.

I have already said that Oriental art was divided between the Louvre, the collection Grandidier and the Musée Cernuski. But to these must be added the Musée des Religions, where there is a complete series of the potteries used in the religions of India, China and Japan; and the Musée de Cluny, which contains a magnificent collection of the faïences of Rhodes. The finest arms and armor in France are in the Louvre, the Musée d' Artillerie, Cluny, and for very early times, in the Museum of St. Germain.

As to the history of the *mobilier*—beds, tables, stools and candlesticks—so intimately allied to that of the other arts, we should know nothing about it at all if we judged of it only by a State bed at the Louvre, or a Boule armoires. We must study it successively at Cluny up to Louis XIII., at the Musée du Garde-Meuble from Louis XIV. to Napoleon I., and at Carnavalet for the First Empire and the Revolution. For the history of hangings we have a series of tapestries at the Musée des Gobelins.

And even all this great number of varied and beautiful specimens would not be enough to evoke the entire history of the *meuble* if, scattered about everywhere, in almost every house,

we did not find what might be called living types of all these successive styles which have served workmen as models. In the beginning I said that Paris was a city of museums, but perhaps this is not quite accurate. The whole of Paris is nothing but one great museum.

# *Les Invalides.*

Louis XIV., a contemporary of the author of some of the most fantastic fairy-tales ever written, Perraut, the writer of "Asses' Skin," "The Sleeping Beauty in the Wood" and "The Blue Bird," would have treated it as a more fantastic fairy-tale still if anyone had told him that less than a century after his reign the throne of France would escape from the Bourbons to fall into the hands of a little officer from Corsica.

What would he have said if someone had gone on to predict that under the auspices of one of his own descendants, Louis Philippe, this same soldier of fortune would one day be interred in that very palace of the Invalides which he had built as a magnificent monument to the military glory of his own reign?

All this has been made possible by those two great levelers, death and time. Not only is no one indignant, but no one is even surprised now at seeing the imperial eagle by the side of the royal sun. More than that, the imperial eagle has even eclipsed the royal sun with the shadow of its wings; for who thinks of Louis

XIV. at the Invalides? No one goes there but to see the tomb of the Great Emperor.

It was in 1840 that the ashes of Napoleon were brought to Paris. They were carried to their last resting-place on a chariot drawn by twenty-four horses harnessed four abreast, and caparisoned with violet velvet. On either side of these walked under-officers of the Guard, bearing the standards of eighty-six departments. All the way the great *bourdon* of Nôtre Dame, tolled only for kings and emperors, sounded out its solemn voice. In the midst of the Guard walked two Marshals, an Admiral, and General Bertrand, who had come on from St. Helena. To the General Louis Philippe handed the Emperor's sword, with the words: "General Bertrand, place Napoleon's sword upon his coffin." And General Bertrand obeyed, with tears streaming down his cheeks. Then General Gourgaud, also in tears, placed the Emperor's gray cocked hat next his sword; and thus all that was left of the great genius who was not only the greatest conqueror, but also the greatest slayer of men, found its eternal repose.

To-day, under the gilded dome you will see pilgrims from all parts of the world who have come to look at the Emperor's tomb. Leaning over the marble balustrade, silently they look down into the round hole of the crypt upon the gigantic sarcophagus of blood-red

stone. Around it are twelve great victories, sculptured by Pradier, in the form of twelve female figures, holding in their hands funeral wreaths and palms; and twelve bundles of flags taken at Austerlitz. In the cold light which fills the place the twelve stone goddesses take the aspect of phantoms, and the standards the pale tone of faded flowers. It is an admirable setting for this mighty sarcophagus, with its cover suggesting a lion's claws in repose.

In spite of the fact that certain details show a want of taste,—such, for instance, as the yellow-green and violet mosaic of the floor,—and that there is too much theatrical striving for effect in the artificial blue light which illuminates the tomb, opposed to a flood of yellow light falling upon the altar opposite, you feel, nevertheless, a choking of the throat as you look, from the ever-poignant emotion of standing in presence of the dust of what was once so great. But as you turn away your eyes fall upon the inscription placed on the door of the crypt: "I desire that my ashes repose on the banks of the Seine, in the midst of that French people whom I have so loved." If you are like me, you can not help a slight feeling of regret that this last wish of the Emperor was not taken more literally. I could have wished that his mausoleum had been raised on the very edge of the Seine, at the other end of the

Napoleon's Tomb at the Hôtel des Invalides.

Champs de Mars, in the form of an immense monumental stone, upon which the sculptor had carved nothing but the cocked hat, the gray redingote, the sword of the officer, and the sceptre sown with bees, of the Emperor I am not a lover of the Panthéons of great men, and it does not seem to me fitting that Napoleon should have been put in the house of Louis XIV. Louis Philippe, perhaps, was actuated by some such idea as that which inspired the celebrated history of Napoleon by the Jesuit, Pére Loriquet. He treated the Emperor simply as a general; and the conquest of Europe was spoken of only as a series of campaigns undertaken in the service of Louis XVIII. As a matter of fact, I have heard that Louis Philippe did affect to consider Napoleon only as a link in an interrupted monarchy, and that in showing this honor to the founder of a new dynasty his idea was to add to the glory of his own ancestor.

When you are most moved in Les Invalides, however, is not, to my mind, in the midst of all these complicated mortuary splendors, but when in the Museum of Artillery adjoining you stand before the cocked hat and gray redingote that Napoleon actually wore on the battlefield, the swallow-tail coat of Austerlitz, and the dressing-gown of St. Helena. It is these faded and moth-eaten garments which

bring us closest to him, and move us more by their simplicity than everything else by its magnificence.

You may say the same for the armor of Louis XIV., in an adjoining room, so astonishingly modest for a sovereign so great, especially by the side of the gilded armor of those princes of the Renaissance, François 1er, Henri III., Charles IX. Truly, the greatest men are the simplest. And what most touches us among all the things that man has made is what brings us closest to man.

# *The Mode.*

The Mode lives in Paris in the Rue de la Paix. Who installed her there, where she came from, and why she has always preferred Paris to any other home, is something I only succeeded in satisfying myself about lately. Her principal associate seems to be art. The French always say, "l'Art et la Mode." They link the two together as though they had some relation; and, as a matter of fact, when we look back over their history they seem both to have followed pretty much the same lines. In the time of the Second Empire, for instance, when all art was artificial, the mode put on hoop-skirts. Then art gradually took nature for her inspiration, and mode simply gathered her petticoats more and more closely about her and followed on. Now, pretty much all she pretends to do is to drape in some sort of way the lines of the human figure. She used to include sewing. But art doesn't sew. That is the reason why the new Paris frock sometimes comes to pieces.

I used to wonder which of these two came first, as in the eternal problem of the owl and the eggs. "When I think of the beauty of the

full-fledged owl," Froude made the bird of Minerva say upon this subject, "I should say it was the owl. But when I consider my own childhood, I am inclined to think it was the egg." History I found quite powerless to enlighten me upon this in respect to art and mode. In the reign of Louis XIV. art was pompous; and so was mode. So was everything, for that matter, woman herself; at least, the only sort of woman that either of those two ever took any notice of. It was only the official woman, the woman of the court, that they considered worthy of taking into account. In the epoch of Louis XV. which do you say was the earlier, the pleat or Watteau? It was a wanton, voluptuous time, and the style for everything and everybody was to be *dans le laché*, as the French say. Did the painter get those loose, flowing robes from the women; or did he invent them, and the women follow on?

By the time the reign of Louis XVI. was in full swing Rousseau had started a great craze for the country woman, the child; everything that was simple and pastoral. Mode, always an extremist, went in for nothing else. She thought of nothing but fichus, garden hats, baby shoes. On every occasion she insisted on playing the part of the guileless shepherdess. In those days she had a much less fickle, changeable character than now. She remained the same for ten years, twenty years, at a time.

All the women bowed down to her blindly. There was no personal taste; no such thing existed. Fashion was an absolute monarch.

Oddly enough, no photographs nor drawings of her were made in the early times. Her counterfeit presentment was seen in a life-size doll which was dressed in the latest style of Versailles or the Palais-Royal and called *La Poupée de la Rue Saint-Honoré.* Then replicas of this were sent to England, Germany, Italy and Spain and set up before the eyes of the courts, very much as the Buddhists and the Brahmists set up their goddesses. Catherine de Medici, I learned from the French archives, had sixteen of these dolls, and she dressed them in mourning after the death of her husband to correspond with her black-hung walls. It was not until the middle of the eighteenth century that some ingenious person conceived the idea of getting up whole newspapers devoted to nothing but mode, and called fashion journals. In the early advertisements of these it was said: "Dolls are always imperfect and very dear; while at best they can give but a vague idea of the fashions." Some of the figures in these early fashion papers were exquisite. If you want to see any of them to go to the Musé Carnavalet. They are really artistic and thoroughly charming in color. The new French fashion journals had an immense influence on Europe. Mode was

French by birth. She had an Italian relation or two, but they were stiff, grandiloquent creatures, who stalked around in palaces and got themselves up to represent their parts, whatever they imagined those were. In the time of Henry IV. there were some Italian ateliers for mode at Fontainebleau. But she was purely French, as I said before. She became a great queen, and anyone who has read the first chapter of this book will understand why, with such a universal standard of taste in France, everybody was ready to be influenced by her. Look now at a French fête, or function of any sort. Everybody is *en toilette*, and there is not a woman in the country, even the humblest I imagine, who does not have something pretty to put on *pour sortir*. Feminine French instinct could never feel itself jarring on the landscape, and inventive genius and delicate taste in dress have been from all time natural gifts of the French people. Through the fashion papers the fame of this French mode spread all over Europe in the eighteenth century. Every country became subject to her, and tributary to the commerce and industry of the French capital.

There were no dressmakers, as we understand the word, in that day. There were merchants. There was a *nommée Bertin* in the eighteenth century, who seems to have got herself a good deal talked about. There was

The Flower Market.

In a Fiacre.

the little milliner, the dealer in what were called "fanfreluches," all sorts of feminine trifles. The great high priest of mode was the coiffeur; we find famous artists in that line, such as Legros, Frederic and Leonard; and they adapted not only the whole art of architecture to their hair-dressing, but every new craze in society. Mode, who, as we have seen, always went in for everything, even insisted on wearing the new discovery of vaccination in some way, and Legros invented for her the *coiffure à l'inoculation.* Soon every lady in Paris wore on her head an allegory symbolizing the triumph of this new discovery, through a serpent, a club, a rising sun, and an olive tree covered with fruit. Much more remarkable still, however, must have been those ladies crowned with coiffures representing English parks, with nothing forgotten; meadows, trees, babbling brooks, and even a flock of sheep grazing. All these strange fancies you can find in the old prints of the Bibliothèque Nationale.

I have spoken of the reign of Louis XIV. As is natural to suppose, Napoleon paid great tribute to mode, who was a queen after his own heart. He obliged the generals and other members of his court to give their wives plenty of money for dress, and himself paid great attention to the toilettes of the court ladies. Napoleon had not a fine taste, and what best

pleased him was magnificence; frocks loaded with diamonds and precious stones. During his time the great coiffeur was Michalon, who drove a cabriolet with a negro behind, and charged a louis for dressing a woman's head. It was in that day that the celebrated trial between the hairdressers and the wigmakers came off, when the latter, jealous of the coiffeurs, tried to keep them from practicing their art. The coiffeurs triumphed. It is curious to see the records of this famous case. Hairdressing was one of the liberal arts, having for its aim the representation of beauty in the same way as the poet, the painter or the sculptor. Women were never so badly dressed as in the time of Louis Philippe, and in the Second Empire all art was false, as I said before. And this brings us near enough to the present day for us to get things at first hand. From that time on it is no longer natural for one to personify mode. She takes an entirely different aspect in my imagination. In that day there arose a Louis XIV. in dressmaking, who, oddly enough, was an Englishman. His name was Worth. Worth was the father of modern dressmaking. It was he who had the idea of centralization. A modern dressmaking house is also a house for stuffs, laces, passementeries, embroideries, a thousand and one fancies in material decoration. Worth was not an artist; he thought of

the dress and not the female figure. "*Il a compris les robes; il n'a pas compris la femme,*" as an authority with whom I was once talking put it. Worth forced and stimulated every branch of industry pertaining to feminine things, and whole new houses sprung up for specialties. All the various parts of the dress were specialized also, so that now every dress turned out from a great house represents the work of at least ten special workmen; one for the sleeves, for instance; one for the collar, one even for the facing.

The whole sociological evolution is so intricate, one part so reacts upon another, that, strangely enough, a curious new element entered into fashions with the rise of fortune in dressmakers. The sons of these great wealthy heads of houses were entirely different types of individuals from their fathers—purely business men. We find many courtly old-fashioned gentlemen among these dressmakers of the old school, of which M. Doucet, père, was an example; but there were no artists. The idea was still always the dress, not the lines and delicate harmonies and *nuances* of color, as it is to-day. We are now in the domain of fact, however. It is easy to learn from the great authorities of the mode just how fashions are made; and, as a matter of fact, fashion follows the general sociological evolution, especially in art. Art comes

first. A universal knowledge of art in France forms a universal standard of taste; through this women's ideas and fancies are formed; the dressmakers are simply mediums for the expression of the passing prominent ideal.

M. Jacques Doucet, the second of the old house of the Rue de la Paix, was the founder of the last school of art in fashions. His father had made a fortune, and the son, a man of thoroughly artistic temperament and remarkable taste, became the friend of the impressionist painters, like Monet, Manet, etc. At one time he was just about to start a fashion paper with colored plates done by Monet and Miss Cassatt. It was M. Jacques Doucet who brought all the formulas of the art of the day into woman's dress; the line, contrasts and harmonies of color, for instance. The Salon for this art is the stage.

In half the theatres in Paris you found the stage was nothing else but a Salon for mode. Nothing is played in them but society plays written for toilettes, and the galaxy of pretty and elegant actresses who wear them so delightfully. Where is the simplicity of the great actress of the Français, Mlle. Mars, for instance, with her tiny account book in puce-colored silk marked "Souvenir" in seed pearls, and such entries as: Expenses for the month of October: 12 fr. for galloons; 13 fr. for a carpet; 20 fr. for a powder puff; 7 fr. for sundries. What

a long way from that to one single gown for an actress of the Vaudeville or the Gymnase to-day; some such thing as mousseline de soie hand-painted by a Salon artist, incrusted with the rarest lace and embroidered with seed pearls. The "varnishing days" of these frocks are great Parisian events. All Paris is present at a fashionable première, while the great dressmaker sits in his loge and watches with mingled pride and misgiving the effect of his creations on the sensitive Parisian public.

It is curious to see how everything in art passes into fashions. Here is the history of one: Every great house has attached to it its artists, its designers, who have special genius for mode, and not only make the sketches, but see them put into execution. With a mannikin and a *première* they drape, pin, match colors, combine harmonies, till the idea of the dress is sketched on the living model. Mode does not aim to do much fine sewing nowadays. Once the impression is there, fashion is satisfied. I once happened to see one of these designers making a model. It was of black mousseline de soie over an interlining of soft grey mousseline de soie, and charming in shape and line. The designer, you could see, was not satisfied. Something was wanting. She sent for mousseline in all tints, veiled her lining first with blue, then rose, then mauve, which under the black made a faint

iridescence. The eye was satisfied, and a new fashion was born. All the great furnishers of Paris went to work making rainbow gauzes and other iridescent things. All that came from Loie Fuller's influence on art. She came just at a moment when the impressionists had trained the eye to *nuances;* she embodied this whole movement. All this reacted on dressmaking.

M. Jacques Doucet in mode, Mme. Reboux in millinery, have been two great moulders of this mode. But fashion is ever capricious, volatile, changeable, in these days. Other great creators came up, such as Paquin and Carlier, for instance, like new artists and men of letters. Everybody studies the old models. At Carlier's they will show you rare old books picked up on the quays and in old shops which give all the models in mode since first there was a fashion in bonnets. Sumptuous and fascinating palaces are these great dressmaking houses to-day where in a background of pure style the daintiest women of the world congregate in an atmosphere of color, elegance, luxury and art.

# *The Studios.*

We speak of the great family of artists, and as a matter of fact the artists in Paris form a great family, in the sense that they all have certain common traits. They get pretty much the same sort of education in the studios, have much the same aim in life, which is to win fame through their art, and have a general horror of politics, of bureaucracy, and of the "bourgeois," as such. As in all families, among them there are the grandfathers, covered with honors, whom the younger generations chaff, and who revenge themselves by declaring that everything was better in the old times. Then there are the fathers, beginning to turn gray, who cannot resign themselves to the thought that their fame is on the wane, and go about reiterating the ideas they were the first to launch, but which long ago became common property. There are the sons, from thirty-five to forty-five, in the prime of life and the full force of their powers. And there are the young men, full of hope, audacity and supreme disdain for everything that has gone before them. Quite apart and by himself was Puvis de Chavannes, who up to the

very moment of his death went on creating chef-d'œuvres in which there was not the slightest sign of waning force, and living so absorbed by his poetic reveries that he was entirely unconscious of the monastic simplicity of his surroundings, or of the degree to which he towered above his contemporaries.

In this great family it is, on the whole, the men of from thirty-five to forty-five, in the prime of life, who are the most interesting. As a matter of fact, many of the grandfathers, and even some of the fathers, never were quite what their reputations made them. They were "formed" in the second Empire, in that time of artificiality and bad taste in art when Puvis was laughed at, bottles of ink were thrown at the statues of Carpeaux, when Whistler, Claude Monet, Ribot, Manet, all the painters, in short, who went directly to nature for their inspirations, were refused at the Salons. What is left of these over-estimated reputations? Decorations, autographs of kings and princes, and popularity with the people who measure talent by official honors, and the patent to immortality given by the title of Academician. For many years most of them have stood still. M. Bouguereau, for instance, is tranquilly going on painting precisely the same nymphs and cupids, in precisely the same tones of cold-cream, that he made thirty years ago. M. Bonnat paints presidents of the Re-

public year after year, each more chocolate in tone than the last. M. Gérôme seems to have turned from infantile scenes which look as though they had been punched out of the canvas only to make sculpture that is equally uninteresting and equally uninspired.

When we come to the fathers we find they show the effects of the impulse toward sincerity and naturalism which came with the Republic; but many of these men of talent, and often of great talent, apparently gave up trying to create at least fifteen years ago, and since then keep repeating themselves. The evolution of art has gone on around them; it has left them turning in the same place. Some of them, the portrait painters in particular, seem to have given themselves up to the pure joy of making money. We still find many historical painters. They have progressed in the sense that they paint new subjects. M. Jean Paul Laurens, an admirable painter of historical scenes, has gone from the Middle Ages to the time of Napoleon. They do not seem to realize, however, that it is not the subject, but the *genre*, that has gone by. The impressionists have so accustomed us now to finding light and color vibrating in all pictures, as they do everything in nature itself, that the artificial painting of history no longer delights us. More than that, it even shocks us a little; just as an artificial stage

setting seems coarse by the side of real fields and real woods.

Charming paintings of real fields and real woods we do find from some of the older men, evidently excellent pupils of Bastien Lepage. But Bastien Lepage died young. If he had lived he would surely have been the first to profit by the impressionists and put more color and warmth into his delicate, ethereal grays. Much as I enjoy Roll and Raphael Collin, I always wish they had not stopped at Bastien Lepage.

What a change has come over the spirit of landscape painting in these last years. A half a century ago landscape painting was literary. When Guizot ordered for himself from Rousseau a view of the Château de Broglie, where he had spent some time with his wife, who had died, he asked the painter to make it "of a sad and grave character, in harmony with his feelings." It is rare that a literary man of great breadth does not find a literary interest in a great landscape even now. Puvis de Chavannes's "Summer" Melchior de Vogue called "A Social Evangel." In Courbet's "Les Demoiselles du Bord de la Seine" Prud'hon found a "romance of the contemporary woman." Poussin and Claude Lorrain generally put literary interest into their pictures. They painted from nature; but from a great many sketches they made

MASSENET AT HOME.
From "Nos Contemporains Chez Eux." Copyright by Dornac & Cie.

a composed picture and gave it some literary or historical meaning.

The old Dutch masters painted Nature without troubling themselves much about giving her a literary meaning, but they paid no attention to light. They did not paint "the moment," and they often put the sunlight into the picture in the studio, after it was done. The personages were added in the same way, and neither they nor anything else were affected by the sun. It was Turner who first began to experiment with light and to paint Nature in all the real splendor of her light and color. He was the first impressionist, to call him that for want of a better name.

Then in France came Corot, who was the father of the French impressionists. He painted the "moment"; but only one moment. It is always twilight for his nymphs; "those frail, diaphanous figures, whose tremulous white feet seem not to touch the dew-drenched grass they tread on." He was the first painter to make everything—the hour, the personages, the landscape—unite to give a single harmonious impression; and he was the precursor of Monet, Sisley, Pisarro, Berthe Morissot, who reproduced every moment, and made those studies of the atmosphere which have had such an influence on the evolution of art.

You might say that Monet actually tamed

the sunlight. He caught and kept it in a canvas, by using the very processes of nature herself; the decomposition of light into its prismatic colors, and the shock of one of these against another. I remember one in particular which especially showed this. Near at hand it was nothing but a crescent of yellow paint, left apparently just as it had oozed out of the tube, in the centre of a mass of thick daubs of blue. The shock of the two colors, calculated with infinite art, made the picture from a distance a little white boat with luminous sails, sailing over a sunlit sea. This study of the atmosphere so new and so fascinating entirely took possession of Monet. His pictures are instantaneous mental photographs, as it were. He paints not the hour, but the fraction of the hour; and he paints nothing more in nature than that. Meanwhile other men have profited by his investigations and those of the other impressionists, and carried them on. One group in the Salon of the Champ de Mars, nearly all from thirty-five to forty-five, is not only especially remarkable, but especially characteristic of the last forward step in the art of the end of the nineteenth century. The impressionists broke with everything that had gone before them. The "new" landscape painters inherit not only from the Monets and Sisleys, but from the Peruginos, Velasquezs, Claude Lorrains.

They reproduce the "moment," making everything in the picture harmonize, the objects, the personages, the emotion awakened by the moment; but at the same time they keep in sight the great masters of the past, in particular the one who specially appeals to the temperament of each. These are the "chercheurs" of to-day, as the others were of twenty-five years ago.

Among the younger men take M. Cottet, for instance, one of the most personal of the group. He is a Savoyard, who was born among the mountains overlooking Lake Geneva. He never lost his love for the rude, simple life of his boyhood, but he has transported it to Brittany, where the types are more marked, where the struggle for existence is more poignant, and where every day some drama is played in wresting a livelihood from the eternally savage sea. How does he manage to paint these primitive fisher folk so simply, so naturally, and yet give such impressions of the underlying intensity, the tragedy of their lives? His special master is Puvis de Chavannes, and he uses the same methods as Puvis. Look at the scene in the Life of St. Genevieve, in the Panthéon, where St. Rémy is blessing St. Genevieve as a little girl. What is there in it? It is only a child of the people, by whose side a man has stopped as he rode by on horseback to lay a

hand on her head; but it is from the entire composition, the hour, the lines, even the simplicity, of the landscape, with its spare clumps of trees in the background, the tall pines in the foreground, that we get the intense impression of solemnity, of something beyond the ordinary in the whole.

M. Cottet uses the same method. One of the last things I saw in his studio was a remarkable canvas he had just finished for the Exposition of 1900, "The Fire of the Pardon of St. John." The peasants in the part of Brittany it represented believe fire sacred, and it was from the ensemble, the mysterious awe in the kneeling figures gathered round the sweeping, flaring flame, the lonely hour, the primitive country, the suggestion of the sea at hand, from the light, the color, that the mystic beauty and power of the whole came. For this M. Cottet had sketched six years, noting everything that would contribute to the impression for which he was working, eliminating everything that was foreign to it, and combining all finally into one composed whole.

One of the chief pleasures you get from M. Cottet's painting is in his use of color. He is extremely personal in his use of it, with what the French call "les violences et les chatouillements," peculiar to himself. Oddly enough in the beginning he was an extreme impressionist. By a happy chance he

met Simon and Ménard in an exhibition of pictures, found them sympathetic, attached himself to them, and ended by modifying his exaggerations of his palette. He has a beautiful studio in the Rue Nôtre Dame des Champs, just over Whistler's, where he receives on Wednesdays. M. Cottet is a *sensitif* in the extreme, who hides before the world an underlying vein of melancholy—result of the tragic death of several near friends—by a fund of wit and drollery.

M. René Ménard, of whom I have just spoken, is another of this group who has achieved fame before forty. His father was a famous savant in the art, and his uncle a remarkable student of Grecian archæology. Brought up by these two, the boy Ménard, who was in the Beaux Arts while he was yet in knickerbockers, peopled nature with nymphs and goddesses; and the man adapts beautiful impressionist landscapes taken from the forest of Fontainebleau, from Southern Brittany or from Normandy to Greek scenes. This exquisite perfume of antiquity which, in spite of himself, he puts into everything is one great charm of his painting. He, also, composes one picture from many sketches. Look at his "Terre Antique," just bought by the State for the Luxembourg. Even the clouds carry out the impression of the lonely grandeur of the Temple of Agrigentum, on the antique

soil of Sicily. They seem like the gods, departing. M. Ménard prepares the canvas a year before painting a picture, and it is this which gives to everything by him its mellowness and iridescence. He has the most interesting studio I know of, because its entire ensemble is such an expression of an artistic personality. To begin with, it shows all his love for method and for delicate *nuances*. It is a marvelous arrangement of objects chosen for beauty of color or form; potteries, tiles from Persia in strange tones, antique glasses, tapestries, and many curious things he has picked up in his travels simply for their tones, such as *chardons* from Palestine, twisted pine-roots from the gorges of Tarn, pebbles covered with golden lichens gathered in the lost islands of Finisterre.

The painter himself, a tall, fine-looking man, is goodness, serenity and indulgence personified, and his Mondays are rare days when interesting people group together, and the host, who is a delightful *raconteur*, is the soul of everything. His childhood was spent in Barbizon, and he has a fund of charming anecdotes of Corot, Rousseau, Dupré, all the painters of the Barbizon school, who were intimate friends of his father. Here is one taken at random: One day, as Dupré was working near the "*mare aux fees*" in the forest of Fontainebleau, a young man came up

with a sketch and begged him to criticize it. The master made a grimace. There was nothing in it—neither drawing, nor color, nor promise of any sort. The youth insisted on a criticism. "Very well, here it is, then," said Dupré, and with three or four vigorous strokes of the brush he demolished the picture entirely. Instead of appearing offended, the youth thanked him warmly and walked off. Dupré had reason to meet him again, and he had profited by the severe lesson. It was Troyon.

M. Simon, another of the remarkable men of this school, is emphatically a *chercheur*, an experimenter. A certain private fortune has always kept him above the necessity of considering art from its commercial side, and it is perhaps to this that France owes the "*Cirque Forain*" and the "*Portraits de Mes Amis*," those two remarkable pictures which many amateurs and lovers of art in Paris have said were in themselves sufficient to found a school. The group of portraits, which, happily for America, has been bought by Pittsburg for the Carnegie Institute (the portraits are of Ménard, Cottet, Dauchez, and Edmond and André Saglio) is the sort of painting which Diderot loved. It has the qualities of the greatest painting in color, composition, temperament and light. M. Simon's favorite masters are Velasquez and Frans Hals. He

prepares the sketches for his Brittany pictures during the three months he spends in Benodet in the summer, and executes the personages as far as possible in superb aquarelles. Then in his studio in Paris he paints the whole picture at a single stretch, putting into it an energy and force which leaves him completely exhausted when it is finished.

He is slight, delicately built, reserved with strangers, excellent and pleasant with those he knows, and a man of the most extreme sensibility. I heard him confess one morning to not having slept at all that night because he had read the evening before that the drought was going to ruin the peasants of several provinces. He has the extreme versatility of the cultivated Frenchman, and his first successes were in literature, in brilliant short stories which he published in Gil Blas. In his conversation he has a rare facility for finding the exact expression; for launching those "mots qui enlevent le morceau," as the French say. It was the taste of his young wife for painting which decided him, fortunately, to devote himself to art. She is an associé of the Champs de Mars, and does tinted drawings, very clever, full of charm, of an entirely different style from her husband. They live on the Boulevard Montparnasse, in an

apartment with a studio arranged with exquisite taste.

Mme. Simon's brother, André Dauchez, who lives in the same house, and is a brilliant young painter of this same school, also does Brittany scenes. I know of no one who has ever given to a more remarkable degree the impression of great stretches of country on which men and women are toiling. I studied lately in Dauchez's studio a series of eight or ten sketches for one picture. It was interesting and suggestive to see the fashion in which he worked to get the dominant note of his impression. In each sketch the figures, carefully drawn in the beginning, were a little more subordinated until they simply blended into the whole.

MM. Cazin and Besnard are the older and famous masters of this school, whom I speak of after the others because, while they are among the great painters of this century, they no longer surprise, like the new men who are carrying on the evolution of art. Cazin reminds you of one of those old Calvinist patriarchs who fled from the West to the North in the time of Louis XIV. to escape persecution. He is a thick-set, broad-shouldered man, with a long gray beard and long gray hair carefully arranged. He always wears a large gray cape and a high hat with a flat brim, and carries a long walking-stick studded with little symmet-

rical incrustations, with an ivory handle, which is nothing more or less than an old *anne*, a tailor's measure of the olden time, and this patriarchal appearance is further carried out by the old-fashioned courtesy of his manner.

M. Cazin has moved from the West to the North, from Anjou to Picardy, but it was in no way to flee persecution. On the contrary, few men have had the satisfaction during their lifetimes of seeing themselves, like him, considered as a great chief of modern landscape painting, and of having their pictures bring the prices of the great masters of other times. Up to the age of forty or forty-two he lived at Angers entirely unknown. Each year he sent to the Salon his beautiful and poetic canvases. Each year they were a little higher skied. One day, however, two men noticed one of them. They were the sculptor Alfred Lenoir, and a friend of his, an architect. They wrote to Cazin to ask the price—500 francs. The two agreed to buy the picture in partnership and share its possession as well as the expense. Although it is worth now twenty thousand francs, they still own it in common, and every six months it passes from one to the other.

Cazin has now bought up immense tracts of land in the Picardy, from which he got his finest inspirations, so that they may stay uncul-

Bonnat's Studio.

Besnard in His Studio.

tivated, and covered with those delicate trees and shrubs, those clumps of furze and gorse which we know so well. All over them he has stationed keepers, not to protect his game preserves, but his art preserves. He does not want the solitudes he loves peopled.

You could not find a personality more the opposite of M. Cazin than M. Besnard. Besnard is an enormous man, who is always dressed by a London tailor, who wears nothing but English cravats, and would pass for an Englishman if it were not for the eye of the Latin. For that matter, he lived many years in London, where a certain side of English life appealed to him—the taste for sport and for out-door exercise. It was in London that he met his wife, a Frenchwoman also living there, a sculptor of much talent. Something that he brought away with him from England was an irrestistibly funny manner of imitating the Englishman trying to talk French. He has often found it a fruitful source of amusement in traveling in France, where he has sometimes succeeded in mystifying a whole table d'hôte. He is one of the men in Paris who has the most esprit.

I once asked M. Besnard how he came to make his researches into light. He said it was the result of living in England. He was a "Prix de Rome" and he went to England to refresh himself with more modern paintings than that

of Italy—the Turner's and Sir Joshuas, for instance. The brilliancy of London life in the season led him to devote himself more and more to the study of color and light. When we think of it, nowhere but in London do we see so much color out of doors, in a setting of green.

Besnard lives in a picturesque private hotel in the Rue Guillaume Tell. He receives in his vast atelier, filled with canvases, sketches, curious souvenirs of his travels, the statues and studies of Madame Besnard swathed in linen. The other rooms of the house are curious and personal. He never hesitates to use anything as a decoration, no matter how eccentric, provided it gives him the joys of form and color. The fire-place of his salon has for fender great serpents of enameled pottery, interlaced; and he uses as centre-piece for his dining table the charming torso of an antique Venus, kneeling, without head and without arms, which delights the eyes of his *convives*. He has a delightful country place on the lake of Annecy. I do not always enjoy some of Besnard's eccentricities in painting, and anyone who is an experimenter must sometimes end in eccentricity. But his best things, such as his Salon exhibit of last year, his decorative panels and the "Flamenco," are some of the most beautiful things of the art of the nineteenth century; they reveal such imag-

ination, such science of the harmonies of form, such exquisite and personal harmonies of color. Besnard is one of the most remarkable instantaneous draughtsmen I know of. The great passion of this colorist, who once said to me: "I always exasperate one side of nature," is Ingres. He is a fervent disciple of Emerson, and quotes Emerson's saying: "Whoso would be a man must be non-conformist." Of living painters he has been more influenced by Degas than anyone else, who was also the master of Forain.

Speaking of Degas, one of the best impressionists who ever painted the figure, it is rare that anyone sees him nowadays. He seldom admits a visitor to his studio. He is suspicious both of painters and visitors who are not painters. He looks down on the Salon and never exposes there, and you can hardly see his work elsewhere in Paris than at Durand-Ruel's or in the Luxembourg, which inherited a few of his pictures three years ago, among others a dance at the Opéra. In spite of his age Degas still looks young and he is an admirable and witty conversationalist. It was he who defined Gustave Moreau at the time of his election to the Academy as "A monsieur who paints the gods with watch chains."

One of the most beautiful houses, a charming hotel in the Rue de Bassano, almost at

Ministre," said Laurens, at last, "the day that I am perfectly satisfied with a picture I shall stop. I shall never touch a brush again."

How many pages it would be easy to fill with notes about the personalities of these masters of the present, who will so many of them soon be the masters of the past, but I can only add a few more about one who is one of the geniuses, Rodin. To know something of Rodin you must not see him in society, where he rarely talks, nor yet on his reception days, where he is a little ill at ease in his frock coat. You must have occasion to surprise him in the morning, as I have once or twice, at work among his patricians; rushing in an old blue robe de chambre from the studio where he is finishing the monument to Victor Hugo to the other where for twenty years he has been adding complicated figures to his Dante gates.

Then he will talk, and he may show you his collection of unfinished sketches and projects which more than anything else will give you an exact idea of his genius and its limitations. Some of these are pure marvels, like everything which Rodin has interpreted with his profound sensibility when it is something that he has seen. Others, pure works of the imagination, are puerile and even absurd. You could not imagine anything more incongruous by the side of projects glowing

with genius than some of his sketches; water nymphs, childishly drawn, crossing their limbs at right angles, for instance, or some of the plans for the gigantic monument to "Work;" an immense staircase mounting in a spiral to the figure of an angel, with statues all the length of the staircase, and still other statues in the pedestal to symbolize subterranean toil. Rodin cannot make a work of pure imagination. Anything he has ever seen he transfigures. It was because of this lack of imagination that he succeeded in making only a vague sketch of Balzac. His only idea of him he got through conversations with his literary friends, each of whom gave him some trait of the great novelist. The result was a piece of sculpture of immense suggestiveness, but which was never anything but an unfinished sketch.

# *The Louvre.*

There is never a season, scarcely a month, if you live in Paris, when some friend, or friend of a friend, passing through, will not come to you and say: "I do not want to go to the Louvre without you. You have lived here so many years, and are such a lover of beautiful things."

For a long time I never resisted these seductive words, partly, I confess frankly, because they flattered my vanity; partly out of a feeling of sympathy for anyone starting out to make acquaintance with this immense palace, crammed from top to bottom with treasures. I hardly know of a more appalling experience than first expeditions to a picture gallery. The chef-d'œuvres stare at you with their strangely familiar and yet unresponsive faces; the endless succession of changing forms and colors bewilders your brain; at last even your memory forsakes you under the effort of leaping from period to period of the world's history without intermission. Often, if people were quite frank, I am afraid they would confess, like me, to having been reduced at the end of their early

visits to a point where their only idea was that of trying to keep their equilibrium on the highly-polished floors. The professional guides at so much an hour are no resource. They assume not only the duty of making you see everything, but feel responsible for your emotions before each picture. So for a long time I went to the Louvre with anyone who asked me.

As this experience becomes greater, however, I find that I become less and less accessible to flattery or to pity. Very few people, I discover, really care much for anything you may have to say about the pictures, unless it be to compare this with their Baedekers', and this generally causes me to be taken in *flagrant delit* of ignorance. One class of tourists is interested only in "doing" the gallery; on the principle of a family I once met, whose pride it was to have "done" all Paris in three days. "My wife took the galleries, my daughter the churches and I the cafés," the husband said when he was asked how they had accomplished the feat.

Others are animated by the sole ambition of testing their archæological knowledge of the pictures. They are strong on the "new art criticism" and want to pick out the Raphaels that are Signorellis, and the Botticellis that are Guilio Romanos. Others want to tell the stories about the lost hand

attributed to the Venus of Milo, and about the window from which, according to the legend, Charles IX. shot upon the Huguenots at the massacre of St. Bartholemew. In short, they invariably care for an infinity of things which do not interest me in the least and, on their side, are not interested in the least in any of the things which I love. So I have ended by going alone to the gallery, except when I find those whom I know to be very near to me through a great sympathy of mind and heart, and then I show them *my Louvre.* It is only this sort of a visit that I propose making here. For the discussion of the books alone which have been written upon this great collection would take more than one human lifetime.

As a matter of fact, there is nothing in this vast palace transformed into a museum which leaves me indifferent when I stop before it. Everything in it is of interest, either from the perfection of its execution or the revelation it makes of past civilizations. But if, like me, you are a fervent visitor of museums, you end by making particularly intimate friends in them, which you go to see each time that you pass that way and have a moment to spare. They are friends which come to be like the best of those in reality, for you can always be sure that they will lift you above the petti-

General View of the Louvre from the River.

Gallery of Apollo at the Louvre.

nesses of the everyday world, and that you will leave them cheered and stimulated.

None of the pictures with which I have this particular sort of intimacy are among those which stand at the very summit among the creations of men, and which we look at with wonder—mingled with a slight degree of fear. In the Salon Carré, when I have only a little time, I pass before the "Mona Lisa" of Leonardo and the "Entombment of Christ" by Titian with a respect that is religious, but rapid, and go straight to a corner by the side of the door of the long gallery, where is that portrait of the young Elizabeth of Austria, Queen of France, painted by Clouet in 1570, not long after her marriage, when she was sixteen years old. In her straight robe of satin and brocade, encrusted with jewels so minutely painted you would say they were real, her hair artistically rolled away from her temples and entwined with pearls, her glance seems to have an expression of melancholy and uneasiness as though she was turning over in her mind some little sorrow hidden in the bottom of her soul. The value of the work, no doubt, lies more in the perfect sincerity of the drawing than in the painting. This is thin and hard as people liked it in that day. The model, too, is far from being what might be called a beauty, with her nose a little too large, and her eyes

elongated like almonds. But, nevertheless, she pleases me, my princess! She holds me with the charm of her womanhood and the grace of the young wife who seems to forget, alone before the artist, the rank indicated by her resplendent dress. Possibly she is thinking of some one of those little *tristesses* which are the lot of childish wives; some caress, perhaps, misunderstood by the master —a frown upon his brow—perhaps it is the memory of her mother and the home she has just left forever . . . Who knows? But this picture always means to me an ideal of youth; and I never stand before it without a little clutching at the heart such as you have when, in turning over a bundle of old letters, you come upon the yellowed photograph of a friend who died young, and much loved.

I have, so to speak, an equal intimacy with the young boy by Prud'hon which is in the gallery of modern paintings on the right as you leave the long gallery. It would be hard, however, to imagine a picture more different from the Clouet. It is broadly painted, and the personage is evidently a plebeian, simply clad in a brown redingote with black collet, such as was worn at the end of the Revolution. As a matter of fact, two centuries and a half separate these two pictures, and nothing could be in greater contrast than the two

epochs in which this queen and this little bourgeois came into the world, and yet my imagination always associates them together. They must have been about the same age, sixteen; but while the first charms me by the simplicity and candor which she has kept in her royal splendor, the other delights me by his grand air of haughtiness and distinction. His head, with features as delicate as those of a young girl, is slightly thrown back; the glance with which he dominates the crowd is full of confidence in life and pride in his birthright of manhood. It is that of one of those young lion-cubs of the time between the fall of the Kingdom and the rise of the Empire, when orators of twenty moved people with their eloquence, and generals of twenty-five began to conquer Europe.

Two other paintings are among the things in the Louvre which are my special friends. They also are of widely different characters, speaking of widely different times. One is a little landscape by Watteau, in the Salle la Caze, much less celebrated than most of the Watteaus. It represents a setting sun whose orange rays flame behind the tall trees of a park, and are reflected in the mirror of a great marble basin. Seated on the grass and talking gallantly is a company of young people richly dressed. The falling twilight softens the masses, and renders the silhouettes unde-

cided. Few things set me more to dreaming than the contrast between this brilliant and wanton little company—the *fete galante*—and the strange beauty and melancholy of the landscape—the passing day—now "with yesterday's seven thousand years."

The other picture, in the gallery of the Italian primitives, is the "Crowning of the Virgin," by Fra Angelico. It represents the Virgin crowned by Christ in Paradise in the midst of an assemblage of saints where the men are on the left and the women on the right. It is the first figures in this last group which seem to me so specially enchanting, so specially worthy of the subject. This is not only because of the infinite grace of these women in adoration, because of the radiance of happiness in their ecstatic faces, but also because of the exquisite purity and delicacy of the tones in which they are painted. This is one of the finest examples I know of of what an artist can produce under the empire of an unquestioning religious faith. It is hard for the most spiritual of the painters of to-day to raise themselves above a purely human ideal. But all those sublime abstractions —Divine justice, eternal felicity, Paradise—forever evoke for me the vision of these saints which the good brother of Fiesole, surnamed Angelico, painted in the peace of his cell; and

which the hazard of events has set down in the midst of all the movement of Paris.

In the gallery of Renaissance sculpture at the end of the court I fancy no one will have any difficulty in understanding why I have come to have a real tenderness for the little girl in terra-cotta modeled by Houdon at the end of the last century. She is just of that charming age, seven or eight, when the features begin to be clearly defined in the rounded baby face. There is already a foreshadowing of the woman in the life-like head, turned with so quick and supple a movement that it has creased dimples in the neck and the narrow shoulders. A name is inscribed upon the pedestal, an unknown name, Jeanne Brougniart. So she really lived, this charming little creature! She probably grew up, was married, and it is possible that her great-grandchildren live still. Age must have changed her; she must have had the ordinary sum of human suffering and human joy. All that is unknown, lost among all the histories of human existences succeeding each other so incessantly. But nevertheless we know, and those after us will know for endless years to come, thanks to the passing fancy of an artist of genius, that in the beginning of this century there lived a little girl who was called Jeanne Brougniart,

and who was charming when she was seven years old.

For very much the same reasons I am fond of a little personage who lived three or four thousand years ago, whom you will find, high as the half of my arm, on an isolated pedestal in one of the Egyptian rooms of the first floor. The unknown sculptor who fashioned in precious wood the perfect elegance of her form has graven at the bottom her name and her quality. She was called Toui, and she was a priestess. I know of her nothing except that in her youth her face was lovely and she knew it; for she took great care to frame it in an artistic arrangement of curls. But this is enough to bring her very near to me, this, and the thought that I see her there just as she walked formerly through the streets of Memphis or of Thebes, displaying the grace of her figure in her supple robe, and delighting in the admiration of men. Since I have made her acquaintance ancient Egypt is to me no more a dead thing symbolized by a grinning and time-worn Sphynx, or by great stone Pyramids, filled with mummies. In an instant the scenes figured on these monuments rise before me with all the animation of life, and it seems to me as though the delicate jewels ranged in the vitrines near by had just left the faces and the hands they once decked. For this resurrection it has only been neces-

sary for an artist to reveal to me that woman had the same charms and the same amiable perversities in that distant civilization which she has to-day.

Here my enumeration of the things I go to see most often in the Louvre ends. With numberless others I have a friendly acquaintance, but, as is so often the case in the world outside, if I am frank with myself, I must confess that it is an acquaintance which speaks more to the intellect than to the heart. Of such, for instance, is the little Gourzagne in bronze, by Sperandio, in one of the rooms in the department of the Renaissance. Solidly planted on his great war-horse, he evokes in my imagination all the amorous, traitorous and warlike Italy of the Machiavelli, the Cellini, and the Medicis. Of such, too, is a miniature, an evangel of the fifteenth century by Fouquet, where, in a delicious landscape, you see Saint Marguerite spinning among her sheep, while the Roman Governor Olibius stops his horse to contemplate her. Of these, too, is the driver of a Greek chariot, found in the excavations of Delphi, made long before the time of Phidias, and yet showing to a greater degree than has ever been attained by any other artist the qualities of the finest sculpture, delicacy in line and majesty in simplicity.

I do not speak of the Rembrandts, the Rubens, the Van Dycks, the Velasquezes, the

Claude Lorrains, the Venus of Milo, the Victory of Samothrace, of any of the things which are the glory of the Louvre and which are known by all the world; and I do not pretend that others who go to see these that I have made my special friends will take the same pleasure in them that I do, or for the same reasons. If they are quite sincere with themselves their sympathies will probably go elsewhere. For in order that a work of art may move us deeply, not only must the choice of the model or of the subject correspond to some secret inclination of ours, but also, by a mysterious *rapport* of sensibility, we must be capable of being moved before it by some of the feeling the artist had at the moment he got his inspiration. I have only tried to show why certain things a little overshadowed by the celebrities appeal to me and to give a method for walking among the galleries which will always be a source of the most refined and delicate enjoyment of art.

The Arc de Triomphe.

Bridge of Nôtre Dame.

# *Notre Dame.*

I wonder if you have ever, like me, happened to know an old lady who had lived through a whole century without apparently having her vigor either of mind or body impaired by any of those shocks which come every now and then as premonitions of the long repose at the end. One I knew formerly lived in the memory of her first fifty years. After those she gave up following the incessant evolution of manners and ideas; she kept almost entirely to her own room, surrounded by her familiar bibelots and her faded furniture; and she preserved the fashion in dress of the time when she bade the world farewell. Her great-grandchildren, already men, seemed to her almost strangers; they had ideas and a manner of looking at life which she could not understand; and they no longer recalled to her in any way those whom she had loved, long dead, to whom she had given her first as well as her last tenderness.

The sensation of deep melancholy which I always had before this ancient dame, clinging to her past like a dry bough to the bank of a swift-flowing stream, I feel every time that I

stop before the old church of Nôtre Dame. Buttressed on that isle of the city against which breaks the current of the Seine, in the superb charm of her Gothic dress, she has remained for a thousand years an unequaled chef-d'œuvre of art. But it is long since either the admiration or the respect of those who pass by has been worthy of her. Less and less does the world appreciate the mystic beauty of this flower of stone, whose towers outlined against the heavens in the Middle Ages signified to the poor people below the sublime consolations of Christianity—of Faith, Hope and Charity.

Now, we see her only with our eyes; they, the men and women of other days, saw her with their souls!

Barbarous civilization has made of her only a bibelot in an étagère. It has circled her with an iron railing. On one side it has moved away her old houses the width of a street; on the other it has destroyed them. Before her triple portal it has put the desert of a great open place. It has done all this in the name of hygiene, in the name of symmetry, in the name of security against fire, in the name of an infinity of things which may make for the progress of civilization, but have nothing to do with respect for the beauty of ancient monuments. Now, the great flying buttresses of stone bending in double rank

from the tapering roof of the choir to the edge of the aisles are outlined against the sky like the useless skeleton of a bird. In other days they met uneven rows of houses, peering from their huge roofs like timid women from their mantles, and massing themselves against the Cathedral as though imploring protection; and her arches folded them into her shelter like the hen which spreads her wings with all her force to gather in her brood.

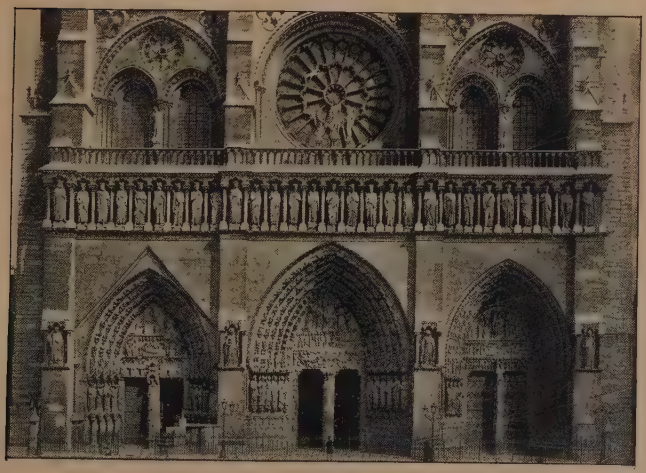
One church in Paris still keeps this adorable air of maternal protection. It is St. Severine, quite near Nôtre Dame, standing in a poor quarter where the homeless find lodging at one sou the night. This example still living, if I may use the expression, makes me feel quite sure that this maternal aspect was an essential characteristic of these old churches, and fortifies me against the arguments of certain modern architects, positive individuals, who have tried to prove to me that scientific reasons dominated over ethical in Gothic architecture. Flying buttresses, they say, were imagined at a period of Gothic art when the nave had become so high in proportion to the delicacy of the columns within that it was necessary to support it from the outside. But, surely, this reason is only secondary. If the great geniuses who built the churches of the Middle Ages had not been sufficiently competent to be able to put feeling above a pure

problem of resistance they could never have made such a symbol of Christianity as you find in Nôtre Dame if you study her understandingly.

As for the spoiling of her Parvis, I cannot imagine what could be said in justification of it. I am not sufficiently the enemy of the architects of to-day to believe it was any of them who counseled the municipality of Paris to change the entire effect of this beautiful church by replacing with an empty space what was once a tangled labyrinth of old houses.

The Cathedral is still no doubt a marvel of harmony through her lines, of majesty through her form, of lightness through her details; but, nevertheless, the feeling that you have in looking at her façade from the end of a great Place must be of a much lower order, I am sure, from that when you saw it at a distance of only a few yards. Then, as you picked your way through the narrow streets, you came suddenly upon her portals, set with those figures with grave and touching faces, which the high relief made seem living in the stone. If you raised your eyes slightly you saw the ogivals receding in ascensions of saints and seraphim, while higher still were other figures, and then columns, and open-work balustrades, and then an immense flowering of gargoyles and chimeras, congealed in the white

One of the Gargoyles on Nôtre Dame.



Entrance to Nôtre Dame.

stone and mounting indefinitely to lose themselves in the pale ether of the heavens. Then you bowed your head, crushed by the terrible majesty of this temple, seen thus from below, and a great humility came into your soul. Close at hand the pitying Christ stretched out His hands in the midst of His cortège of Apostles; and you entered the church to pray.

So it must have been in the Middle Ages, I feel as sure as though I had known the men and women of Paris of that day. The very principle upon which the Cathedral is built confirms this; the way in which the figures fill the entrance only to the top of the portals, and then all the means employed above to make the lines taper more and more, so as to give that effect of extreme height without heaviness which was sought for in everything built at that time, and can be felt with intensity only upon the threshold. Anyone who has been at Rouen, at Cologne, or who has simply raised his eyes just as he entered Nôtre Dame, will understand what I mean.

I know, unfortunately, all the uselessness of protesting against a vandalism which is more the work of circumstances than of men. You could not remake a primitive Paris to serve as a casket for this most precious of churches. And even if some royal caprice should one day attempt it, where would be the eyes to see anything but a chef-d'œuvre of art inwhat,

in the centuries of simple faith, was only the most worthy house which could be conceived of for God?

She sits on her island, this beautiful old church, in the splendor of her robe of wrought stone, dominating the years that pass, the men that change, the life in such miraculous process of transformation by science. And the city grows immeasurably, and buildings succeed to buildings all the length of her flanks, leaving before her gray mass the calm of her Place; as the river which divides noisily at the pier of a bridge leaves a little spot sleeping and protected on the other side, and then noisily rejoins its current. She, with one or two other churches, are all that is left in Paris of her time, as though to remind men that, with all their discoveries, they have not been able to advance by a single line that last step she marks in the history of the human mind—Christianity!

# *The Commerce of Art in Paris.*

From time immemorial people who have had money and taste, or who have wanted to give themselves the luxury of appearing to have either, have bought works of art. But speculation in works of art is something entirely modern, dating from about 1872. It is almost unnecessary to say that it had its birth in Paris, when we remember that Paris is one of the greatest markets in Europe for the sale of objects of art, and the greatest market in the world for the sale of paintings.

This is because of its Salon, or, rather, its Salons, since now there are two which have a unique reputation on account of the number of artists who expose in them and the very remarkable quality of their work. Salons are a necessity; for, in order to produce, an artist must feel that his work is going to be seen and bought. They are also a stimulus. The French Salons have existed for two hundred years; but speculation in pictures is something which came with the downfall of the Empire, and the establishment of the Republic.

This is one of the most curious consequences

of the substitution of the Republican for the Imperial régime in France. As soon as people began to have leisure to think about something else besides war and the Commune, everybody who up to that time had been in opposition to the Government and in disfavor with the Emperor, was suddenly raised to the highest pinnacle of popularity. The official painters were thrown into discredit, and, naturally, others who had been systematically left in the background were proclaimed the only masters. Among these last were men who fifteen or twenty years before were refused at the Salon, like Rousseau, Millet, Ribot, Puvis de Chavannes, Courbet, and others; like Manet, whom the Emperor in person had laughed at, and had even declared shocking. The result was that almost from one day to another pictures which had been scarcely worth a few hundred francs found buyers at high prices. Business men could not fail to see in this an excellent opportunity, and thus it was that great houses came to be created in Paris for the sale of pictures, such as those of Goupil, now Boussod-Valadon, Sedelmayer, Durand-Ruel, Bernheim, Detrimont. They soon had branch houses in other countries, and also rivals, and the business of art became one of immense importance. Speculation in art, in the beginning prudently confined to painters of the

school of 1830 to 1840, soon extended to the old masters, and finally to new men coming up, in whom dealers or even simple capitalists looking for good investments, thought they saw coming celebrities.

The rise of this new commerce, from a general point of view, had many advantages. It interested people in a large number of artists who up to then had been ignored or forgotten; and it sharpened the critical sense of the public, so that it no longer considered the annual Salon as a sort of great picture-book, got up simply for its amusement. The Salons had then, as they have still, the great disadvantage of often giving to artists without real talent a momentary and fictitious value, admirably adapted for speculative purposes, while they ignored other men destined to take an important place in the evolution of art. Nevertheless, the birth of the commerce of art in Paris had a happy effect on art in general, through stimulating production, and leading artists through the prospect of fortune as well as fame, to develop to the highest degree their talent in as many different lines as possible.

The immediate consequence of all this was that the Paris Salon, which had had a world-wide fame for more than two centuries, became not only the most important exhibition of art of each year, but the most important market

for the sale of works of art. In 1881 the State, upon whom up to that time the Salon had depended, recognized this psychological change which had come over it, and of its own accord gave over its organization to its members, who formed themselves into a society called the "Société des Artistes Français." Up to that time the State in protecting the Salon had done an extremely disinterested work, and one which cost it a great deal of money, but it nevertheless considered this indispensable in order to keep up the prestige of French art. The day that this same Salon became a paying institution, self-supporting, the State considered that it had played its rôle of Macænas as long as was necessary, and allowed the Salon to become a private enterprise. Through a sort of conscientious scruple, however, the Chambers decided that every three years there should be an Exposition, organized by the State, which should contain all the best Salon exhibits of the three preceding years. This was held only once, in 1883, and since then the law has never been applied. The Société des Artistes Français objected that the official Exposition, following immediately after their own, was too formidable a rival.

The conscientious scruples of the Government, however, were not without foundation. The Salon was then composed of all the

French artists and a great many from other countries, organized into a society with almost the sole aim of holding a great annual exposition for selling their works. There were constantly, as was inevitable, all sorts of differences and rivalries among its members, and these were always to the detriment of these artists—a minority, but fortunately a minority of importance—whose sole aim was art. At the end of 1889, under the pretext that the jury of the Exposition had depreciated the value of the medals they awarded in giving too many to foreign artists, a considerable group of painters and sculptors separated from the Société des Artistes Français, with Meissonier at their head, and created a new Salon called La Société Nationale des Beaux Arts. The two are popularly known as the Salon of the Champs Elysées and the Salon of the Champ de Mars, from the places where, up to the time of the Exposition of 1900, they held their exhibitions.

They are now rival business houses, of which the first is the larger and the richer of the two, and the only one, moreover, which contains in its bosom the members of the Institute. The second is made up of artists who are in general more original than those of the first; and it is directed by men who are quick to carry out all the improvements or reforms demanded by the public. But by all ordinary

business methods both try to attract custom. Does the "Champ de Mars" proclaim that it counts more creators (Rodin, Besnard, Puvis de Chavennes, Carrière, etc.)? the "Champs Elysées" replies that it alone is in the real tradition of what is beautiful in art, since it has all the masters of the Institute and the Beaux Arts (Bouguereau, Gérôme, Benjamin-Constant, Henner, Breton, etc.). The first opens a *salle de repos* with beautiful hangings, easy-chairs and a buffet, and the other follows its example. One walks in the footsteps of the other even in the organization of a special section for works of art. The commercial element has so gained ground of late in the Champ de Mars that it is not at all unlikely that before very long there will be a third schism, with a third Salon.

All these divisions and rivalries are a source of annoyance to the Government, whose duty it is to be impartial, and yet who cannot be because its preferences go naturally to the majority, and to the "Old Guard" of the Champs Elysées. The jury for the Exposition of 1900 was made up, by the Minister of the Beaux Arts, of four elements: one-fourth from the Champ de Mars (Société Nationale), one-fourth from the Champs Elysées (Société des Artistes Français), one-fourth from the members of the Institute, one-fourth from the functionaries and art critics.

The majority, you see, necessarily came from the Champs Elysées, as all the members of the Institute belong to that society.

All this history is essential in order to understand the development of the commerce of art in Paris, and its condition at the present time. Outside of a very few isolated painters, of whom I shall speak later, an artist, in order to sell in France, must be admitted to one or the other of these Salons and be exposed there in a good place. The Champs Elysées admits the most works, but it hangs them anywhere from the "line" to the ceiling, and it awards medals which place their receivers *hors concours*—which means that their pictures are accepted without being passed upon by the jury. The "hors concours" take all the best places in the Salon, and nearly all the places on the line. To get the other good places young painters must have the protection and the influence of a member of the jury; and to have a medal they must be pupils either of him or of some other of the heads of the society. It is easy to see the result that this has upon art. To be accepted at the Salon is the young painter's principal stepping-stone towards selling his pictures. To get a medal is to be *hors concours*, and that means the certainty of exposing every year in a good place, and, therefore, of always having his works in the market, advantageously. So, he goes into the

studio of some one of the heads of the Champs Elysées (not all of whom have real value as artists), and more often than not sets himself to imitating as far as possible his master's manner; naturally the style his teacher most admires. This explains the immense prestige of the Julian School, where all the professors are heads of the Champs Elysées, and it also explains the generally uninteresting character of the Champs Elysées Salon. The exceptional artist will also go to the Julian School; but the average in every school is mediocrity, and nearly every Julian student of good and regular standing on principle is passed in his examinations; that is to say, is admitted to the Salon. So we see a great many mediocre artists in the Champs Elysée Salon, and an artificial and temporary value is given them in numberless cases simply because they are in the Salon. The painters, then, too, stand by each other. Mediocrity makes the law.

In the Champ de Mars the *hors concours* has the title of *associé* or *sociétaire*. Each one of the sociétaires has the right to expose ten works without examination by a jury; each of the associés the right to one under the same conditions, and the last generally have three or four taken outside of these. Only some two hundred places are left for newcomers, and those not the best. The Champ de Mars also is already beginning to be affected by the same

commercial elements which have influenced the Champs Elysées. So we see that the two Salons which put the hall-mark on art, and established criterions of art, are formed not upon artistic, but upon business principles. For all sorts of reasons men are often pushed forward who have only a fictitious artistic value, and others are protected who have almost no artistic value at all. Foreigners then get with difficulty a correct idea of the actual state of French art, of the real position of the different French artists, and the actual money value of their works? Tolstoi, in a work on the beaux-arts, tells how falsely his opinions of art in France were formed from reading the art criticisms in the French newspapers—nearly all pure advertisements—and a visit to one exhibition of French pictures, organized by a picture dealer of Moscow.

We in America, outside of those of us who are able to see the Salons every year, are even worse off than the Russians; for while we read fewer French critics, distance makes us more dependent upon the dealers, who now furnish our public almost its only opportunity of seeing foreign pictures, and who, being business men naturally, select everything with a single eye to business. All picture-selling now has come to be as much organized speculation as any other sort of operations in stock. What is the point of view of the picture-

dealer? That of every other business man, whose aim is to sell very dear what he has bought dear, and dear what he has bought cheap.

In the first instance, when the dealer wants to sell for an enormous price what cost him a great deal, what he imports and what he puts in fashion are the pictures of some painter *à la mode*, in whose works he has made a "corner" by buying up all of them. When the man is dead the operation is excellent. A great deal of speculation of this sort has been done in the ancient masters. One house that I call to mind has been operating especially in Rembrandts, but the supply is exhausted, and it is putting the other Dutch masters in fashion. A great deal has been done with the 1830 painters, like Rousseau, Dupré and Corot. This source also is pretty well exhausted (though a large number of false Corots have been put in). I have noticed lately, however, that a particular dealer was preparing a future "corner" in Corots by buying up all that are left, of which but few are the best. In these cases the market is generally "bulled" for them all, good or bad. The painters of the end of the Empire, such as Millet and Bouguereau, have been forced up to fabulous prices. Bouguereau has declined greatly.

In the second sort of operation what the

The Invalides.

dealer brings over and exploits are the pictures of some painter that he has put artificially *à la mode* or of one to whose works he has given an artificial value by forcing them up to an exaggerated price at some celebrated sale. Putting an artist artificially in fashion is especially practiced with portrait painters. The dealer chooses an artist who has made himself a little talked of in Paris, through being a *prix de Rome*, or having made the portrait of a king or pope, or of Sarah Bernhardt, which has been a sensational feature of the Champs Elysées Salon, who has been written about, which is an equivalent to a good advertisement in the American papers, and signs with him a contract to go to the United States and make so many portraits at so much a head. I know of some cases of portrait painters where the dealer got half the price. It generally happens that either these artists are men who have no reputation in the artistic world abroad, like Chartran, or they are men who have a great reputation, like Benjamin-Constant, but *for certain works*. In the case of a good artist like Benjamin-Constant, the people in Paris who are jealous for the reputation of French art will tell you, as they have told me: "He can make a fine portrait if he tries. But you must not judge of him by those he paints simply to make money." As it is, all of the portraits that I have seen lately

by Benjamin-Constant have been painted simply to make money. A constant habit of working rapidly has made him almost invariably replace painting by clever effects of finish, dissimulate in shadow the hands which it takes too long to draw carefully, and to make conventional backgrounds such as you see in photographs.

A great portrait, for that matter, like any great work of art, can only come from the impulse of inspiration; and no one can have two or three inspirations a month in the midst of all the distractions of travel, and before the faces of personages entirely unknown, of whose personality and character he has no idea. Rembrandt would never have done that sort of thing. He preferred to keep on copying himself.

As to picture sales and the fictitious value given by them to pictures, I have seen many amusing examples. For instance, I remember going some three years ago to a little exhibition at the Hôtel Drouot of the works of Jongkind, who had recently died. A very good small-sized Jongkind could then be bought for about $60, as there was but little sale for his pictures. The entire collection was bought in by the representative of a syndicate of picture-dealers made up of the leading houses in five cities, including New York and Boston. The syndicate then pro-

ceeded to put the Jongkinds on the market in this way: At the first great sale one was put in and the price run up by the syndicate to a certain point. When it had gone considerably above the original value of the work, bidding stopped, and the picture was knocked down to the dealers, who divided the loss. This operation was repeated at successive sales, until finally an outsider stepped in and bought a Jongkind for something like $600. The syndicate then divided the profit, and as it owned all the painter's works, could make an extremely good thing out of them. The dealers did the same thing lately for the impressionist, Sisley, who lived and died in poverty. They had bought up a monopoly of his works, and upon his death they organized a sale for the benefit of his children, and asked his colleagues of the Champ de Mars each to contribute a picture. Most of them did, to find that the sale was intended simply as a means for exploiting the Sisleys and depreciating the other painters, who were sold for prices that were absurd. The published prices of these sales largely set the prices for pictures. In this way dealers succeed in depreciating the reputation of the men they do not own, and making the painters more and more dependent on them.

For various reasons speculators had a last gold mine in the impressionist painters. Cer-

tain dealers, believing in the future of these *chercheurs*, bought up a large number of their pictures at a time when they were poor and unknown; or they got artists to make engagements with them on long contracts to give them a monopoly of their work (Monet and Degas), or they depreciated their work while they were living to buy it up in a lot after their death (Sisley). They were mistaken in their idea that impressionist painting was going to replace every other; but nevertheless, as it is an important contribution to the evolution of art, the impressionist pictures they have in their galleries have a real value, especially those painted between 1885 and 1887. They do not all, however, possess the value attributed to them.. The last Monets and the last Sisleys have been very inferior. Monet and Degas live apart, outside of the movement of art and the world, and are little influenced by commercial considerations. But few men can keep up to their best standard when their work is, as it were, mortgaged beforehand.

Most of these resources for making great sums rapidly are beginning to be exhausted, and therefore the latest source for speculators is selling imitation old masters. A droll caricature of Forain's some time ago in one of the French newspapers was a hit at this. A painter, in a room representing the last de-

gree of destitution, the wife ill, the children ragged and emaciated, is working feverishly at an easel. A dealer in a fur-lined coat stands by, saying: "You know I must have three Corots, two Ribots and a Diaz before the 15th." Just at present imitation Dutch masters are specially put on the market; Dutch masters are particularly fashionable. I know of a young American painter outside of Paris who is making an excellent living, after much struggling, out of works of art of this description.

One resource still remains, and long will remain to the speculator. That is, to organize little exhibitions of pictures of some outside men and attract public attention to them. Sometimes these are good, oftener poor, for with the eclecticism existing everywhere now in France, most of the good men expose in the Salon. Another, very commonly practised, is to lie in wait for the new men in the Salons who are beginning to be appreciated by the public, and persuade them, through the prospect of a regular income for their families, to article themselves out, as it were, to the dealer, and furnish him all their works, at so much a head, for a fixed term of years. This is perfectly legitimate, but the dealer, having a monopoly of this painter's pictures, runs them up to an artificial value, after putting them in fashion.

I have been amused to see the degree to which fashion ruled artistic taste. I saw an instance of it not long ago with the Norwegian painter, Thaulow. Thaulow was then living in Dieppe, and I was visiting his family. As he was away from Paris and the art movement, he had arranged to give his pictures on contract to a dealer for a term of years—now nearly ended. Thaulow had then a European reputation, and his studio was full of lovely things. A Thaulow was then worth about $400, and it was certainly the time to buy, before prices went up. I spoke of this to several American friends interested in picture buying, but it fell upon the most stony indifference. Thaulow was not in fashion. One of these same persons bought later of a dealer in New York one of these Thaulows, which in a very short time had been pushed up to $900. I take this instance because a Thaulow is really worth $900, but suppose it were not? The operation might be the same. This sort of thing, too, reacts with foreigners upon other painters whose works rise slowly simply through their permanent and real artistic value.

Nevertheless, it must not be forgotten that the dealer takes great risks like the publisher; and on the whole, as I said in the beginning, the rise of the commerce of art has been a great gain to art, as the rise of an exchange

for the manipulating of stocks has been a great gain to our country in stimulating the creating of railroads, and the developing of new territory. The difference between the two, however, is that one is frankly recognized as a business, conducted on purely business principles; the other is not. The picture-dealer, a business man, whose art instincts, if he has any, are necessarily stifled by his commercial instincts, is allowed to create the popular taste for art, and then to exploit it as he wills. His judgments on not only modern but ancient pictures are taken by a great majority of the picture-buying public as authorities.

For Europe, America is now the great art-market of the world; and it is the great field for art speculation because distance and a lack of understanding of the conditions on the other side make us less able to judge of the real value of the foreign art products which are brought to us, since we have no means of forming our own judgments upon them through a broad standard of comparison.

Other countries have passed through this. They now protect themselves against it, as in Russia, by organizing exhibitions entirely outside of the dealers. In Russia the royal family replaces the State, and gives to art the protection that the Government gave to

France in the early days. The last exhibition was under the direct patronage of the Emperor's aunt, the Grand Duchess of Oldenburgh. The French Government sent the director of the Beaux Arts, M. Ronjon, to this, and the Grand Duchess invited M. André Saglis, one of the young attachés of the Beaux Arts, who has showed the most initiative in propagating a knowledge of the best French art abroad, to come on at her expense and give practical suggestions for this exhibition. We do not want a royal family, and our Government could never play the rôle that the State did in France, where the country and the constitution and the arts have developed simultaneously during several hundred years. Our wealthy and public-spirited citizens are beginning to replace both these. But could not we also have exhibitions of pictures organized outside of commercial conditions?

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